

IOWA BIRD LIFE

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FRONT COVER: Ivory Gull, Red Rock Dam, Monroe County, 27 December 1990. Photo by Tim Schantz.

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056).

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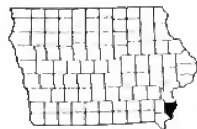
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LAUGHING GULLS IN DES MOINES COUNTY

THOMAS H. KENT

On 9 September 1989, Dick Tetrault and I took his speed boat to the access on the Mississippi River 2 miles south and 5 miles east of Kingston in Des Moines County to look for a Royal Tern that had been reported there. This location is 6 miles above Lock and Dam 18, which is north of Burlington.



When we arrived, Louise Augustine of Chillicothe, Illinois, was there looking for the tern. We invited her to join us in the boat to look for the bird.

Between 9:30 and 11:15 a.m., we had several chances to study two Laughing gulls, one a juvenile and the other a one-year-old bird. They were first seen separately on sand bars on the Iowa side. Later they were together on the Illinois side. We approached to within about 40 yards in the boat and used 10 power binoculars.

The juvenile bird was on the water with Ring-billed Gulls. I recognized it immediately by its overall tan-brown color and from my recent experience with similar birds at Red Rock Reservoir and in North Carolina in late August. The bird was smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls (about 2/3). It had an overall tan-brown color with the light feather edging on the scapulars and wing coverts providing a scaly appearance. The forehead was lighter brown. The bill was dark, thinner, and of more uniform thickness than a ring-bill's bill, and slightly decurved at the tip. There were thin white upper and eye crescents. In flight I noted the white base to the tail (dark brown distally), thin white tip to the tail, white under tail with black outer tips, dark outer wing tips with tan brown inner wing and back, and thin white trailing edge to the wing.

The one-year-old bird was seen on a sand bar with Ring-billed Gulls and Caspian, Black, Forster's, and Common terns. It was smaller than the ring-bills and larger than the small terns. The shape and size were similar to the juvenile bird. I noted the thin black bill that drooped slightly at the tip. The head was shades of gray with more gray below and behind the eye. It did not have the sharp white and black appearance of a Franklin's Gull. The upper and lower eye rings appeared to meet posteriorly but not anteriorly. The underparts were very light gray with a grayer appearance to the sides of the lower neck and upper breast. The legs were dark. The back and wing coverts were medium gray, much darker than any ring-billed. In flight the wing tips were quite dark, and the rest of the wing and back were medium gray. The trailing edge of the upper wing was white. The tail was white with a full black subterminal band about 1 cm wide.

Later in the morning we observed the same two birds together on a sand bar about one mile down river on the Illinois side. The two were similar in size and shape, and we saw the same features described above at close range.

Juvenile Laughing Gulls are distinctive. I was able to pick the younger bird out quickly. When we first saw the one-year-old bird, we considered both Franklin's and Laughing gulls. A juvenile or first-winter Franklin's would not have uniform gray in the wing coverts. A first-summer or second-winter Franklin's Gull would not have a full tail band. The bill shape also favors Laughing Gull. The bird appeared to be in second-winter plumage, except for the tail band which fits better with first-summer plumage. I was impressed with the soft grayness of the bird and its similarity to the birds that I had photographed in North Carolina two weeks earlier.

Laughing Gull was very rare at inland Midwestern locations until the 1960s, but has been on the increase since then. In Ohio, Laughing Gull is a rare spring and casual fall visitor along Lake Erie (Peterjohn 1989). A few summer on Lake Erie, and one female laid eggs. In Michigan, it is considered regular in spring and irregular in summer and fall (Payne 1983). It is listed as very rare in northern, and accidental in central Indiana (Keller et al. 1986). In Illinois, it is a rare spring and fall migrant with some summering in north and central Illinois (Bohlen 1989). In 1982, the Wisconsin Records Committee discarded most of the state's old records of Laughing Gulls because of identification problems (W. S. O. Records Committee 1984), but the pattern of records since then is similar to other Great Lakes states. In Minnesota, it is considered casual based on seven May to August records, five of which are from the Duluth area (Janssen 1987). There are very few records from North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. Laughing Gulls are listed as casual in Missouri (Easterla et al. 1986).

The pattern of occurrence of Laughing Gulls in the Midwest can be summarized as follows: In spring a few adults regularly migrate up the Mississippi River with most ending up on the Great Lakes; some of these are seen in summer. A few second-year birds have been described in spring and summer. Fewer Laughing Gulls are seen in fall than spring; some fall birds may be adults that migrated north in spring, but the presence of juveniles suggests that there is some northward post-breeding migration. Juveniles have been noted in August in Illinois (Bohlen 1989), and juvenile and first-winter birds have been noted in late summer and fall in Kentucky (Monroe, et al. 1988).

Adult Laughing Gulls may be confused with second summer Franklin's Gulls (Goetz 1983, W. S. O. Records Committee 1984), mainly because they may lack the white bar that separates the gray of the proximal wing from the black-and-white wing tip. Juvenile Laughing Gulls are quite distinctive because of their overall brown color, white at the base of the tail and trailing edge of the wing, and black primaries and secondary bar. Second-year Laughing Gulls are not well illustrated in standard sources; identification must be based on overall size, shape, and bill differences from Franklin's Gull and detailed descriptions of plumages such as those in Grant (1986). It is worth noting that Franklin's Gull always has white outer tail feathers, never a complete tail band as seen on the second-year Laughing Gull in Des Moines County. As Peterjohn points out, second-year Laughing Gulls have variably grayish heads and lack the half-hooded appearance of Franklin's Gull (Kent 1988).



Figure 1. Two views of juvenile Laughing Gull in Des Moines County on 9 September 1989. The overall light brown gull has all black primaries and primary coverts (outer wing), barely visible black tail band and secondary bar, and white rump and trailing edge to secondaries.

Based on occurrence in surrounding states, Iowa should have some Laughing Gull records. It is interesting that DuMont (1933) dismissed early references to this species by Anderson (1907) on the basis of the possibility of confusion with first-year Franklin's Gull, and Stiles (1941) recognized that the large (almost as large as a Ring-billed Gull) black-headed gull that he saw at Lake Manawa on 25 March 1941 might not be accepted as a first state record for the same reason and because he did not collect it. A record from Coralville Reservoir on 26 March 1977 (Halmi 1977) was initially accepted (Dinsmore et al. 1984), but later not accepted based on the possible confusion with first-spring Franklin's Gull (Kent 1986). Both of these birds would have been early for Laughing Gull, which is usually found in the Midwest from late April to October, but has been recorded from February to December. Three other recent Iowa reports of Laughing Gull have not been accepted because they might have been first-summer Franklin's Gulls (Silcock and Kent 1984, Kent 1988). There are two Illinois Laughing Gull records that could also have been in Iowa: an adult at New Boston seen by Bohlen on 19 May 1971 (Bohlen 1978) and four adults and an immature at Nauvoo on 12 June 1971 (Kleen and Bush 1971).

The three juveniles and one second-year bird seen in the fall of 1989 provide the first accepted records for Iowa. The other juveniles were first seen at Red Rock Reservoir on 19 August 1989 and at IPL Ponds on 27 August 1989 (Bendorf 1989). I thought that the occurrence of three juvenile Laughing Gulls in Iowa could be due to a weather pattern and would be reflected by similar occurrence throughout the Midwest; however, the seasonal reports in *American Birds* for the fall of 1989 do not indicate increased numbers, and the regional editors do not even indicate whether the few birds seen were juveniles or adults.

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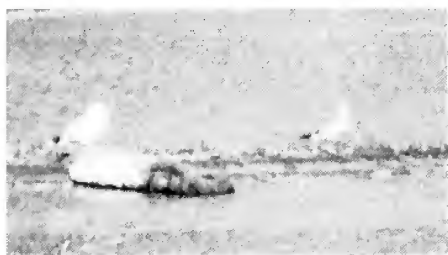


Figure 2. Two views of juvenile Laughing Gull at Red Rock Reservoir on 23 August 1989. The standing bird is smaller, slimmer, and smaller headed than the nearby Ring-billed Gull. The bird in flight shows the light brown inner wing and back, the dark outer wing and subterminal tail band, and the white rump and trailing edge to the wing.



Figure 3. Two views of juvenile Laughing Gulls taken in North Carolina on 27 August 1989 illustrate the features of the same-aged birds in better detail.

CATALOG OF BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD HOSTS FROM IOWA--AN UPDATE

PETER E. LOWTHER

Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) are conspicuous components of Iowa's breeding bird populations. On average, Breeding Bird Surveys in Iowa count 20.5 cowbirds (out of 905 individuals of 78 passerine species; Robbins et al. 1986). Cowbirds are brood parasites; they lay their eggs in the nests of other species. Cowbird breeding behavior, therefore, affects many of the passerine species that nest in Iowa. The total impact of brood parasitism on these bird populations depends both on host abundance and cowbirds' host preferences.

My earlier paper on cowbird hosts in Iowa (Lowther 1985) provided a list of 60 species that have been recorded as hosts of the Brown-headed Cowbird in Iowa. That list was based on the compilations by Herbert Friedmann (Friedmann 1963, Friedmann et al. 1977) as a primary summary of much of the literature, searches through publications of Iowa ornithology, and from data available in the collections of several museums. I provide here an update and summary of this information to give more current understanding to cowbird-host interactions within the state. Friedmann and Kiff (1985), published after my earlier Iowa list, is the most recent general catalog of cowbird hosts and lists 220 species as having been parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds. Of these, 144 species have been recorded as actually rearing cowbird young.

Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data provide indices of species' abundances (note cautions in Bystrak 1981) that suggest which hosts are important to cowbirds in Iowa. If species that are regularly and commonly parasitized are subjectively classified as "good" hosts, then Iowa has 31 "good" host species with 440 counted per BBS route. Seven species make up 85% of these "good" hosts (Dinsmore 1981, Robbins et al. 1986): Red-winged Blackbird, 173.5 birds/BBS route; Western Meadowlark, 69.0; Dickcissel, 62.1; Common Yellowthroat, 25.0; Vesper Sparrow, 17.3; Song Sparrow, 13.5; and Eastern Meadowlark, 14.8.

RESULTS

NEST CARD RECORDS

Iowa Nest Card program data currently provide 414 records of parasitized nests (up from the 152 nest records available to me in 1985). Ten species have more than 10 records of parasitized nests from Iowa: Red-winged Blackbird, 167; Northern Cardinal, 47; Indigo Bunting, 30; Vesper Sparrow, 19; Dickcissel, 18; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 16; Field Sparrow, 16; Common Yellowthroat, 12; Western Meadowlark, 12; and Grasshopper Sparrow, 11. Five of these species are common also on BBS routes, another indication that common species are commonly parasitized.

NEWLY REPORTED HOSTS

Four species, listed below, have moved from my appendix list (of species which have been recorded as cowbird hosts elsewhere, but have not yet been recorded as cowbird hosts in Iowa) to the list of recorded hosts:

Carolina Wren: R. Cecil reported this species feeding cowbird young at Shimek Forest, Lee County, on 7 June 1987 (Dinsmore 1987).

White-eyed Vireo: D. Koenig saw adult vireos feeding cowbird young at Yellow River Forest, Allamakee County, on 22 June 1985 (Dinsmore 1985).

Cerulean Warbler: R. Cecil saw Cerulean Warblers feeding cowbird young on 29 June 1985 at Shimek Forest (Dinsmore 1985).

House Finch: House Finch populations introduced in the eastern United States have only recently established themselves as breeding birds in Iowa. The Summer 1989 Field Reports in *Iowa Bird Life* noted many breeding-season sightings and several nests of House Finches including a report of apparent parasitism in Warren County (Dinsmore 1989). W. L. Borts (in litt.) expanded on this observation: a female House Finch was seen to feed an out-of-nest cowbird which followed the adult finch. A second observation consists of a close-to-hatching cowbird egg found below a House Finch nest in Ames on 2 May 1991 (J. Dinsmore, in litt.). In all of Friedmann's compilations (1963, Friedmann et al. 1977, Friedmann and Kiff 1985) only 23 records of parasitism of House Finches are listed.

ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF KNOWN HOSTS

Additional records of parasitism can be added for the following 47 species. These records come from three sources. First, the number of Iowa Nest Record Cards (NRC) is given; for species with more than 10 nest card records, range of dates is provided. Second, published accounts of cowbird parasitism are referenced and briefly summarized. And third, any museum records are listed. These accounts appear below:

Eastern Wood-Pewee: NRC=1. Nest card record was made 29 June 1976 in Guthrie County by D. M. Stauffer.

Eastern Phoebe: Nauman (1936) listed this species as a cowbird host in his "Round Robin Letters" and later mentioned a specific instance of a phoebe feeding cowbird young on 1 June at Sigourney, Keokuk County (Nauman 1937).

Acadian Flycatcher: NRC=1. D. D. Koenig's nest card observation was made in Van Buren County on 29 May 1979. A pair was seen feeding a young cowbird 1 July 1988 in Jones County by D. A. Reeves (Dinsmore 1988).

Willow Flycatcher: NRC=1. Card of a previously mentioned observation (Lowther 1985).

Horned Lark: M. Kenne reported larks feeding a young cowbird 15 July 1989 near Algona, Kossuth County (Dinsmore 1989).

House Wren: NRC=1.

Eastern Bluebird: NRC=2. Nest cards come from B. L. Wilson, Mills County on 1 July 1983 and from G. A. Seward, Harrison County on 28 May 1983. B. L. Wilson reported one cowbird fledged from a nest box along with one bluebird in Mills County on 1 May 1987 (Myers 1987).

Veery: NRC=1. Koenig (1979) gives details of the nest card record mentioned in my earlier report.

Wood Thrush: NRC=5. Green (1884) gave his impressions of this host in the Polk County area: about two-thirds of thrush nests were parasitized, one particular set contained 6 cowbird and 2 thrush eggs. M. Dixon observed Wood Thrushes feeding cowbird young at Ledges State Park, Boone County, 22 June 1985 (Dinsmore 1985). E. Marceau took a set of 3 thrush and 1 cowbird egg on 5 June 1892 in Dubuque County (WFVZ 134037). R. W. Hegner took 3 sets at Decorah, Winneshiek County (UMMZ 191551, 191553, 191554).

American Robin: NRC=2 [1 new]. Laubach (1984) found 1 parasitized nest at Sheeder Prairie Preserve, Guthrie County (and represented as one nest card record). D. L. Prach contributed a nest card from Lucas County for 14 May 1980.

Gray Catbird: NRC=3. Nauman (1937) listed catbirds as a cowbird host.

Brown Thrasher: NRC=5 [2 new]. Nauman (1937) listed this species as a cowbird host.

Cedar Waxwing: NRC=1. This nest card was from A. B. Thierman of a Story County observation on 25 June 1981. The 1984 Field Reports noted two instances of parasitism (Dinsmore 1984): T. Bray saw adult waxwings feeding cowbird young 21 June 1984 at Lewis and Clark State Park, Monona County and R. C. Hensley found a parasitized nest at Lake Anita State Park, Cass County.

Bell's Vireo: Huser and Probst (1985) recorded 1 nest parasitized at Sioux City Prairie, Woodbury County. J. W. Preston collected a set with 4 vireo and 2 cowbird eggs in Baxter, Jasper County (FMNH 9851).

Red-eyed Vireo: Nauman (1937) listed this vireo as a cowbird host.

Yellow-throated Vireo: M. Dixon saw adults feeding a young cowbird at Ledges State Park, Boone County, on 21 June 1985 (Dinsmore 1985).

Yellow Warbler: NRC=11 [5 new]; between 27 May and 26 June. Museum set from Franklin County, 5 June 1893, contained 3 warbler and 1 cowbird eggs (UN-SM 8704). D. Porter reported Yellow Warblers feeding a young cowbird in Jefferson County, 19 June 1989 (Dinsmore 1989).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: NRC=1 [new]. This nest card record [apparently duplicated in nest card files as 3648 and 4815] is of the published record given in Lowther (1985).

Black-and-white Warbler: Toppan (1889) gave specific reference to a parasitized set of 4 warbler and 2 cowbird eggs taken 27 May 1889 in Missouri Valley, Harrison County.

American Redstart: NRC=1 [new]. This nest card is of a nest in Guthrie County, found 22 June 1976 by D. M. Stauffer.

Worm-eating Warbler: Adults were found feeding cowbird young in Lee County during June of 1985 (Cecil and Sandrock 1985) and 1987 (Dinsmore 1987). Cecil (1988) summarizes his Lee County observations of 1984-1987; of 12 warbler breeding attempts, 5 involved adults feeding young cowbirds.

Louisiana Waterthrush: NRC=1.

Common Yellowthroat: NRC=12; between 21 May and 28 June.

Yellow-breasted Chat: A museum set (FMNH 10001) with no host and 1 cowbird egg from Jasper County, 8 June 1901, taken by J. W. Preston may have been in a deserted nest.

Scarlet Tanager: Two museum sets show this species as a cowbird host in Iowa; WFVZ 116528 with 2 host and 3 cowbird eggs was taken by E. Currier in Lee County, 3 June 1888; and UN-SM 8702 is a set of 3 eggs of this species plus 1 cowbird egg taken 11 June 1890 in Linn County (Shoemaker Collection).

Northern Cardinal: NRC=47 [34 new]; between 19 April and 11 July. Laubach (1984) found a parasitized nest at Sheeder Prairie Preserve; J. J. Dinsmore's observations of parasitism of cardinals in Ames are noted (Anonymous 1988).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: NRC=16 [11 new]; between 11 May and 28 June. SBCMNH 18799 was taken 27 May 1891 by C. R. Keyes near Norway, Benton County, with 5 grosbeak plus 1 cowbird egg. Also Toppan (1889) mentions a set of 5 grosbeak and 2 cowbird eggs taken near Missouri Valley, Iowa, on 27 May 1889. Hegner took a set at Decorah (UMMZ 191788).

Blue Grosbeak: NRC=1.

Indigo Bunting: NRC=30 [27 new]; between 29 May and 16 July.

Dickcissel: NRC=18 [11 new]; between 8 June and 30 July. MVZ 6948 is a set of 2 host plus 1 cowbird eggs taken by R. Tomlinson in Hardin County, 14 June 1894.

Rufous-sided Towhee: Three museum sets show towhees as cowbird hosts in Iowa: WFVZ 116663, with 4 towhee and 2 cowbird eggs, was taken by R. D. Goss in Appanoose County, 3 May 1890; FMNH 9934, taken by H. L. Preston with 5 host and 8 cowbird eggs, came from Marion County, 19 May 1902; and a set in ISM taken by J. W. Preston near Ira, Jasper County, on 8 June 1901 with no host and 1 cowbird egg.

Chipping Sparrow: NRC=2. Nauman (1937) listed this species as a cowbird host.

Field Sparrow: NRC=16; between 16 May and 28 July. Laubach (1984) found 2 of 3 nests parasitized at Sheeder Prairie Preserve. Nauman (1937) listed this species as a cowbird host. A set in ISM taken by J. W. Preston near Ira on 8 June 1901 contained an unknown number of sparrow eggs and 2 cowbird eggs.

Vesper Sparrow: NRC=19; between 20 May and 21 July. M. Dixon's observations of parasitism were noted by Dinsmore (1985).

Lark Sparrow: Hegner took a set at Decorah (UMMZ 191860).

Savannah Sparrow: NRC=2 [1 new]. The new nest card is from N. S. Basore, Adair County, 19 May 1982.

Grasshopper Sparrow: NRC=11; between 19 May and 28 June.

Song Sparrow: NRC=6 [new]; between 5 June and 10 July.

Swamp Sparrow: NRC=3 [1 new]. The new record from Cerro Gordo County, 1 June 1983, by R. D. Andrews.

Bobolink: NRC=2 [2 new]. One record mentioned in Lowther (1985); the other from Cerro Gordo County, 9 June 1983, by R. R. Johnson.

Red-winged Blackbird: NRC=167 [101 new]; between 8 May and 20 July. A nest with 2 blackbird plus 3 cowbird eggs on 5 June 1982 at Sheeder Prairie Preserve reared a cowbird(s) (Laubach 1984). Hegner took a set at Decorah (UMMZ 191692).

Eastern Meadowlark: NRC=3.

Western Meadowlark: NRC=12 [new]; between 17 May and 16 June. The single parasitized nest found by Laubach (1984) at Sheeder Prairie Preserve successfully reared cowbirds(s).

Common Grackle: NRC=1.

Orchard Oriole: R. C. Hensley found 2 parasitized nests in Cass County (Dinsmore 1984).

Pine Siskin: NRC=1.

American Goldfinch: NRC=6 [3 new].

SUMMARY

This paper updates an earlier list of Iowa birds parasitized by cowbirds (Lowther 1985). Records of four species not present in the previous list and additional records for 47 other species are reported here. This brings to 64 the number of species that have been reported parasitized by cowbirds in Iowa.

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APPENDIX

Species not mentioned in this article which have been recorded as Brown-headed Cowbird hosts in Iowa (see Lowther 1985): Mourning Dove, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Warbling Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Northern Oriole.

Species that breed in Iowa, have been reported by Friedmann and Kiff (1985) to be cowbird hosts, but have not been recorded as hosts in Iowa: Blue-winged Teal, Virginia Rail, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Say's Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Golden-winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler (an addition to original list, see Friedmann and Kiff 1985), Prairie Warbler, Summer Tanager, Clay-colored Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Field Museum of Natural History, Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605



Parasitized Red-winged Blackbird nest, 20 June 1982, at Cayler Prairie, Dickinson County with 1 cowbird egg (upper left) and 4 red-wing eggs.

MEET AN IOWA BIRDER: RUTH BUCKLES

HANK ZALETEL

Recently, while researching the history of the Des Moines Audubon Club, I spoke to Ruth Buckles about her role in the leadership of both the Des Moines Audubon Club and the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (I.O.U.). I asked her how she would characterize her involvement in these clubs. She responded by saying that her style was of reluctant leadership; staying out of the limelight but getting things done.

Ruth Dallinger was born in Atlantic, Iowa, on 28 January 1913. The following year her family moved to the country near Atlantic where they remained until she graduated from high school there in 1930. In 1933, she took one semester of teachers training at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls. For the next five years she taught in country schools in Cass County. She decided that if she was to advance, she would need more training. In 1938, she left for Des Moines to attend the American Institute of Business. She graduated with a business degree in 1940. Upon graduation, she was hired by the state and worked in the comptroller's office for the next 12 1/2 years. She then transferred to the state rehabilitation office where she worked until her retirement in 1975.

Her interest in birds began when she was quite young. Her sister and brothers would have contests to see who could identify the most birds. This interest was further stimulated by her aunt, Anna Barnhard, who lived in Des Moines. She gave Ruth her first book *What Bird is That?* by Frank Chapman. She also gave her a pair of 4 power binoculars. After Ruth moved to Des Moines, her aunt urged her to attend a Des Moines Audubon meeting.

The National Audubon Screen series began in the fall of 1943 and consisted of a noted naturalist narrating a motion picture. This series was Ruth's enticement to join the club which she did in 1944; she has been a member ever since.

Her first field trip was to Ledges State Park. Since she did not have a car, she rode with Gladys and Lester Haskell and Janetta DuMont. It was not unusual then for many members not to have cars. Those who had cars always graciously offered rides to the carless. Expenses would be split at the end of the trip.

Ruth still only had her 4 power binoculars. Joe Brown said that he had an extra pair that she could use until he needed them back. Several years later when he reclaimed them, Gladys Haskell took Ruth downtown to an optical shop where they selected a new pair for her.

During her long membership in the Des Moines Audubon, Ruth held almost every office except President and Program Chairman. She declined these positions because of her principle of reluctant leadership. At one time or another, she was Treasurer, Secretary, Board Member, and Hospitality Chair.

In 1969, Ruth married Ira Buckles. Her marriage was to be short-lived, however, for Ira died in 1972.

In 1972, a neighbor had a Northern Flicker nesting on the ground behind her house. She informed Joe Brown of the fact, and he wrote an article about the strange nest for Iowa Bird Life. Curious as to the content of the article, she joined the I.O.U. in 1972 to read about the event.

In 1973, Woody Brown persuaded her to become the I.O.U. Treasurer since there wasn't much to the job. As Ruth's successor, I can testify to the oversimplification of that statement. Ruth was treasurer from June 1973 to June 1981.

I asked her if anything stood out in her mind during her tenure as treasurer. She said that it was traditional, then, for the books to be audited at the annual meeting and a report given at the business session. Unfortunately, Woody did not tell Ruth what to bring to the meeting and, as a result, the majority of the records were left in Des Moines. The audit was done after the meeting.

Ruth, in speaking about birds, stated that she was not a "professional" birder. On field trips she enjoyed the company, the out of doors, and new experiences as much as the birds. The Zaletel family can relate to this love in the fact that Ruth was my wife Linda's first contact with the birding community. Ruth's friendliness and enthusiasm helped to persuade Linda to join the I.O.U. in 1974. I was to follow several years later.

715 West Street, Colo, IA 50056



Ruth Buckles, I.O.U. Treasurer 1973-1981

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1990-91

W. ROSS SILCOCK

This year reports were received from 43 localities (Table 1). Four from last year were weather casualties (DeSoto N.W.R., Spirit Lake, Fort Dodge, and Lehigh), two returned after one-year breaks (Swaledale, Ottumwa), and Oskaloosa returned after a longer break, albeit as a feeder-only count. If everyone reports, we may hit 50 counts soon. There is still a gap in west-central Iowa centered on Atlantic (see Figure 1); it would be nice to get a count from that area.

Former I.O.U. President John Osness wrote an interesting letter asking that the Bremer County count be renamed Waterloo and explaining a little of the history related to the name changes of that count. It had been known also as Wapsipinicon River Valley for some years. Starting this year I have renamed the count Waterloo, even though much of Waterloo is included in the Cedar Falls count circle.

Back to bird counts! After participating in the Saylorville extravaganza, I had the feeling that state totals for individuals and species might be awesome this year. They were and they weren't. Counts of individual species were about normal, with most species occurring in average numbers relative to the last ten years (Table 2). However the species tally was a new record at 141, eclipsing the previous best of 136 in 1988-89. The total of 141 is about 70% of the all-time species list, which over some 55 years of counts for which I have records stands at about 210 although 17 lack documentation, leaving an "acceptable" total of 193 species. The total for this year may go to 142 if the Records Committee accepts the Yellow Grosbeak reported at Alleman as a wild bird. Most of the increase this year is related to the extensive open water on the large reservoirs at Saylorville and Red Rock Lake.

It is interesting to see which species on the all-time list were NOT found this year. There are about 52 species in this group, of which 32 have been recorded only once. The other 20 are listed below along with the number of years each species has been seen.

Common Loon	4	Marsh Wren	3
American Bittern	2	American Pipit	6
Mute Swan	3	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Turkey Vulture	10	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	3
Osprey	10	Chipping Sparrow	7
Ferruginous Hawk	5	Savannah Sparrow	15
Peregrine Falcon	11	Yellow-headed Blackbird	14
Great Black-backed Gull	2	Great-tailed Grackle	3
Barn Owl	8	White-winged Crossbill	14
Boreal Chickadee	2	Evening Grosbeak	29

Just as interesting as the new record species total was the new all-time high species total for a count locality, 92 at Saylorville. The previous record was 86 set last year at Davenport. Saylorville was aided by a virtually open reservoir and excellent field coverage of its variety of habitats. Paling somewhat by comparison, but excellent counts by historical standards, were the 76 at Davenport, 73 at Keokuk, and 71 at Burlington. Mason City's 50 was excellent for its geographical location, as were counts of 68 at Iowa City, 66 at Cedar Rapids, and 63 at Jamaica. Rathbun as usual did very well at 68, near its average, while Red Rock Lake had a new compiler

Table 1. Site Data for 1990-91 Christmas Bird Counts

Location	Species Date Cnt	Total Birds	Field Obs	Pts	Hrs	Miles Car	Owling Ft Hrs	Feeder Mi	Temp Pts Hrs	Snow L	Wind H	Sky am/pm
MISSISSIPPI RIVER												
1. Yellow Riv. For.	29 Dec 43	3434	9	5	33	256	12	2	6	1	1	0 14 12
2. Dubuque	2 Jan 37	3485	18	6	30	218	12	0	0	2	2	5 15 5
3. Clinton	29 Dec 69	11845	9	4	40	353	16	5	53	0	0	17 34 1
4. Princeton	20 Dec 69	7422	9	7	49	359	13	6	64	2	4	33 42 1
5. Davenport	16 Dec 76	25998	23	10	60	364	22	6	61	16	32	31 33 0
6. Muscatine	23 Dec 61	8034	9	4	36	398	9	3	56	6	6	-5 6 0
7. Oakville	19 Dec 69	11717	9	4	37	288	12	2	39	0	0	29 37 0
8. Burlington	15 Dec 71	9579	15	6	48	313	32	3	26	6	30	33 38 0
9. Keokuk	23 Dec 73	45675	8	5	44	436	14	2	38	1	2	0 12 1
MISSOURI RIVER												
10. Sioux City	29 Dec 49	5347	10	6	39	407	21	1	1	4	8	-9 -6 2
11. Omaha, NE	29 Dec 53	5939	24	9	62	446	18	3	12	5	21	-9 -5 4
12. Glenwood	15 Dec 57	116172	7	3	26	324	3	0	0	0	0	28 37 0
13. Shenandoah	15 Dec 56	170072	14	4	30	263	15	2	14	7	30	31 39 0
14. Tristate	23 Dec 56	7706	6	3	27	316	7	1	1	1	6	-10 10 1
NORTHERN THIRD												
15. Decorah	22 Dec 46	4278	11	4	30	278	7	0	0	0	0	-22 -4 12
16. Waterloo	29 Dec 43	1488	4	2	15	183	4	0	0	2	6	-4 11 8
17. Mason City	15 Dec 50	7600	14	8	54	351	23	1	1	12	25	28 30 5
18. Swaledale	29 Dec 24	421	5	3	12	63	0	0	0	2	18	-14 -8 9
19. Algona	18 Dec 40	2087	4	2	17	116	16	0	0	4	2	-7 14 10
20. Cherokee	15 Dec 45	5016	8	4	28	318	3	1	5	4	15	26 33 5
21. Westfield	2 Jan 40	1151	4	3	25	193	11	1	12	1	1	2 11 2
MIDDLE THIRD												
22. Lost Nation	17 Dec 50	4831	13	5	45	404	9	1	15	0	0	31 34 2
23. North Linn	29 Dec 35	1033	16	2	13	195	1	0	0	2	12	5 22 6
24. Cedar Rapids	15 Dec 66	14502	41	18	149	658	112	6	34	18	26	31 37 2
25. Iowa City	16 Dec 68	15860	38	14	105	722	59	5	42	11	27	29 34 3
26. Amana	29 Dec 37	879	8	2	15	75	4	1	2	0	0	0 20 1
27. Cedar Falls	16 Dec 54	4670	4	3	18	163	7	3	31	3	6	10 32 7
28. Marshalltown	28 Dec 39	2150	19	6	33	231	3	0	0	6	25	20 34 2
29. Eldora-Union	19 Dec 40	1830	3	2	16	178	8	1	1	2	6	32 38 4
30. Ames	15 Dec 57	18264	25	9	69	450	47	2	11	4	6	28 33 2
31. Alleman	23 Dec 28	1762	3	1	10	68	1	1	1	3	4	-15 -5 1
32. Saylorsville	16 Dec 92	58223	37	12	94	410	62	3	36	0	0	25 39 1
33. Des Moines	29 Dec 51	25200	8	4	30	260	11	1	2	0	0	-4 4 1
34. Boone Co	1 Jan 52	8635	26	12	62	314	41	2	25	9	43	14 29 3
35. Jamaica	18 Dec 63	16559	8	4	32	333	17	2	10	0	0	13 28 2
36. Sac Co	15 Dec 34	2321	11	5	12	89	8	0	0	5	21	25 32 1
SOUTHERN THIRD												
37. Sigourney	15 Dec 29	1736	6	3	18	300	1	0	0	1	1	33 36 0
38. Ottumwa	29 Dec 37	2123	7	4	13	38	2	1	1	0	0	-1 8 3
39. Oskaloosa	25 Dec 15	127	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5 10 0
40. Rathbun	15 Dec 68	10843	25	8	66	650	10	4	15	10	30	35 40 0
41. Red Rock L.	16 Dec 68	39979	14	6	36	240	12	1	15	3	15	4 19 2
42. Lucas	15 Dec 30	946	4	2	20	65	10	0	0	1	8	8 15 1
43. Lamoni	2 Jan 26	693	1	1	8	54	1	0	0	1	2	5 15 2
Totals		687634	537	225	1606	12140	696	73	630	156	442	

and an excellent total of 68 species also.

There were 537 field observers, down somewhat from recent totals of 600+, divided into 225 field parties, or about five per count. If all counts would have five or more parties, I believe coverage and results would improve markedly.

And now for the weird and unusual. A small albino falcon was identified (correctly in my opinion) by Weir Nelson at North Linn as a Merlin based on the very different flight style from American Kestrel: powerful and direct rather than Killdeer-like. A perplexing question came from Sac County: should a kestrel eating a sparrow count as 1.5 birds? Perhaps not weird, but definitely unusual, possibly a first for Iowa CBCs, was the report, along with the usual miles by foot and by car, of ... BOAT MILES! Cedar Rapids had 12 and Saylorsville 4, a happening so unusual that there is no space for it in Table 1.

Table 2. Christmas Bird Count Data

Location	Gr He	Pi Bi	Sn Go	Ca Go	Wo Du	Gr Te	No Wi	Am Pi	Ma Du	Ga Wi	Am Wi	Ca Re	Al Ne	Le Sc	Co Go	Bu Me	Ho Me	Co Me	Re Br	
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																				
1. Yellow Riv. For.								3	290										1	
2. Dubuque								602											1	
3. Clinton	1			1254		2	1	121	2457		1			1	1				2	
4. Princeton	5			95	4			10	206	3	2			3	233			159	2	
5. Davenport	2			445	3		4	31	2913	8		1		20	195		8	57	6	
6. Muscatine				383				7	193					3	9	1		14		
7. Oakville	2			736				7	2214		22	2	35	25	11		2	41		
8. Burlington	3			91		1			1128	4		8	4	8	52	10	13	13		
9. Keokuk	1			348	2			4	580	1	1	18	1	311	1278	1	1	1115	23	
Subtotal	14	0	0	3352	9	3	5	183	10583	16	4	49	3	39	371	1779	11	25	1403	31
MISSOURI RIVER																				
10. Sioux City	2			300	4	14	2		3157	10						15		161		
11. Omaha, NE				45		3		2	760		1				130			88		
12. Glenwood	2		105485	20		35	2		5942	3	2		10	1						
13. Shenandoah	1		144265	18		10	2	1	22446		2	9	37	27				3		
14. Tristate	1		200						6							1		1		
Subtotal	5	1	249950	383	4	62	6	3	32311	13	3	2	9	47	28	146	0	0	253	0
NORTHERN THIRD																				
15. Decorah				73	1			5	15											
16. Waterloo									1											
17. Mason City			1	577				2	700					1						
18. Swaledale																				
19. Algona				80																
20. Cherokee				2					220					4						
21. Westfield									4							3				
Subtotal	0	0	1	732	1	0	0	7	940	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE THIRD																				
22. Lost Nation				9	2				21											
23. North Linn				82	1				40											
24. Cedar Rapids	1		2	758	1		1	10	2612	3		1	1	2	122					
25. Iowa City	1			150					1884	4		4		6	5	100	2	5	450	17
26. Amana				65																
27. Cedar Falls	1			362	1			3	776	1	1					2				
28. Marshalltown				9																
29. Eldora-Union				48					5											
30. Ames			2	395					90					3			2			
31. Alleman									400											
32. Saylorville	2	2	1	806		5	4	24	18100	8	5	2	14	44	1134	47	49	8046	8	
33. Des Moines	1			239			1	1	241	2		1			1			1		
34. Boone Co.									4											
35. Jamaica			700	6300			3	6	5455	2	1		1	8	2	2	1	21		
36. Sac Co.									177											
Subtotal	5	3	705	9223	5	5	9	44	29805	20	7	5	4	21	62	1359	53	57	8518	25
SOUTHERN THIRD																				
37. Sigourney				100																
38. Ottumwa				325			5		250											
39. Oskaloosa																				
40. Rathbun	2	1	1	850	1			1	4733			4		16	36		7	10		
41. Red Rock L.	1	1	1	945				16	11595	2		1	4	16	4	1	3	2275	281	
42. Lucas																				
43. Lamoni																				
Subtotal	3	2	2	2220	1	0	5	17	16578	2	0	1	8	0	32	40	1	10	2285	281
Total	27	6	250658	15910	20	70	25	254	90217	51	14	57	24	107	498	3327	65	92	12459	337
	Gr He	Pi Bi	Sn Go	Ca Go	Wo Du	Gr Te	No Wi	Am Pi	Ma Du	Ga Wi	Am Wi	Ca Re	Al Ne	Le Sc	Co Go	Bu Me	Ho Me	Co Me	Re Br	

REGIONAL COMMENTS

The nine counts along the Mississippi River had good coverage and averaged 63 species; there were at least 8 observers and 4 parties on each count, and an average of 12 and 6. Keokuk had the most individual birds, although 30,000 of them were

Table 2 B. Christmas Bird Count Data

Location	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Ha	Co Ha	Ac Sp	No Go	Re Sh	Re Ta	Ro Le	Am Ke	Ri Ne	Wi Tu	No Bo	Am Co	Ki Co	Co Sn	Ri Bi	He Gu	Ro Do
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																			
1. Yellow Riv. For.	22		1					43	8	3	16	151			1				219
2. Dubuque	70		1					27	5	3	5	32			3				41
3. Clinton	38		5	1		1		28	2	14	66				2		1	2	264
4. Princeton	55	2	2	3			1	18	3	45	7	84		2			246	101	415
5. Davenport	242	1	1	2				42	1	33	22	1		1	4	1273	782	1407	
6. Muscatine	109		1				1	51	4	6	24	5	15				226	30	181
7. Oakville	37	4	1	2			1	47	12	19	98	2	17		2		1067	6	203
8. Burlington	88	1	1		2			42	12	19	15	12	3		1	8	1354	950	288
9. Keokuk	191	2			1			57	2	12	1	74	83	4	2				
Subtotal	852	11	12	8	3	1	4	355	49	154	254	361	120	5	3	20	4167	1875	3267
MISSOURI RIVER																			
10. Sioux City	1		1		2			9	4	2	10								250
11. Omaha, NE	42			1				40	3	7	5	20	1						7
12. Glenwood	17	4	1		1	1		39	3	31			15		1				120
13. Shenandoah	30	7		1				35		34	29		85						32
14. Tristate	5		1					48	1	13	21	16	5						67
Subtotal	95	11	3	2	3	1	0	171	11	87	65	37	106	0	1	0	0	0	476
NORTHERN THIRD																			
15. Decorah	13		2					56	9	5	120	62							90
16. Waterloo			1			1		4	1	1	57	27							61
17. Mason City			1					19	1	7	132			1	1				378
18. Swaledale											1	64							
19. Algona								9	1	2	437	4							44
20. Cherokee	5							19	6	8	59		6						281
21. Westfield	1	1			1			9	8	4	94	4	9						34
Subtotal	19	1	4	0	1	0	1	116	26	28	963	97	15	1	0	1	0	0	888
MIDDLE THIRD																			
22. Lost Nation	2	2			6			23	4	20	255	62			2				166
23. North Linn		3			1			4	5		75								20
24. Cedar Rapids	2			2				53	6	16	77		11	2			3	3	523
25. Iowa City	23	5			2			81	7	14	31	17	15		1	1943	284		245
26. Amara	3							15	5	2	3	55							25
27. Cedar Falls			1	1				11	1	4	90				1				169
28. Marshalltown		1			1			10	1	1	26								56
29. Eldora-Union								7		3	83	10							41
30. Ames	1			1	1			37		16	121		3	1	2	2			584
31. Alleman								8		4	58	15							8
32. Saylorsville	19	1	2	1	1	1		53	3	33	215	19		1	2	20000	460		351
33. Des Moines	5							33	1	3	11				2		1	1	659
34. Boone Co.	2		5					77	15	10	145	245	13		1				365
35. Jamaica		1		1	3	1		39	2	13	126	5	1		3				120
36. Sac Co.	2							6		7	81	6						2	117
Subtotal	59	13	8	6	14	2	1	457	50	146	1397	434	43	4	1	13	21949	750	3449
SOUTHERN THIRD																			
37. Sigourney								28		6	16		24						33
38. Ottumwa	3							4	1		25	11					4	13	180
39. Oskaloosa																			
40. Rathbun	14	21	3	1	2			82	14	48	17	86	30			144		1	107
41. Red Rock L.	77		1					32		6	3		7			21937	362		42
42. Lucas		15						27	15	3	13								4
43. Lamoni								13	2	5		7	9						
Subtotal	94	36	4	1	2	0	0	186	32	68	74	104	70	0	0	0	22085	376	366
Total	1119	72	31	17	23	4	6	1285	168	483	2753	1033	354	10	5	34	48201	3001	8446
	Ba Ea	No Ha	Sh Ha	Co Ha	Ac Sp	No Go	Re Sh	Re Ta	Ro Le	Am Ke	Ri Ne	Wi Tu	No Bo	Am Co	Ki Co	Co Sn	Ri Bi	He Gu	Ro Do

crows. Princeton and Davenport had the most nocturnal birders, each with 6 owling party-hours covering 64 and 61 miles respectively.

Missouri River counts had a narrow range of species totals, but Glenwood and Shenandoah had high counts of Snow Geese to boost their totals of birds.

Counts in the Northern Third did well to average 41 species each, even though totals of individuals were the lowest in the state by far at only 3,149 per count.

Table 2 C. Christmas Bird Count Data

Location	Mo Do	Ea Sc	Gr Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ow	Sh Ow	No Ow	Be Ki	Re He	Re Wo	Ye Be	Dy Wo	Hy Wo	No Fl	Pl Wo	Ho La	Bl Ja	Am Cr	Bl Ca
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																			
1. Yellow Riv. For.	3	5	1					1	1	49		40	17	1	4	19	89	129	106
2. Dubuque	5							5		22		50	8	1	1	27	65	349	118
3. Clinton	78	10	7	4				5	5	49	1	112	18	32	1	82	189	308	286
4. Princeton	136	8	10	8				3	17	38		95	32	13	9	21	119	308	324
5. Davenport	222	9	22	3				5	2	89		230	26	12	1	12	210	997	695
6. Muscatine	52	10	12	5				1	3	46		90	23	24	5	9	193	203	339
7. Oakville	85	8	18	8	1			2	10	79		114	31	23	14	307	134	1831	342
8. Burlington	65	2	1	5				2	4	41	1	66	13	18	5	14	106	443	141
9. Keokuk	59	2	2	1				4	5	50	1	86	14	34	3	172	241	30000	174
Subtotal	705	54	73	34	1	0	0	28	47	463	3	883	182	158	43	663	1346	34568	2523
MISSOURI RIVER																			
10. Sioux City				1	1			1	1	6		33	8	2		140	29	90	119
11. Omaha, NE	5	2	1	1					22	32	3	87	17	38		420	95	197	238
12. Glenwood	2	1							4	22		33	5	20		2	88	173	130
13. Shenandoah	3	2	5		9			2	1	18		32	1	4			119	13	105
14. Tristate	40	5	8	2				1	6	36	1	42	6	62		2257	151	67	184
Subtotal	50	10	15	3	10	0	0	4	34	114	4	227	37	126	0	2819	482	540	776
NORTHERN THIRD																			
15. Decorah	18			1				5		40		51	14	1	4	51	134	416	86
16. Waterloo	1	1	2	1	1				1	5		9	2	2	1	4	29	116	33
17. Mason City	79	2	7					3		11	1	59	15	4		448	100	587	177
18. Swaledale			2			1				1		5	3			21	12	11	3
19. Algona	11		2	1				2		12		24	10	2		84	24	111	82
20. Cherokee	71	1	1			1				10		29	12	32		804	58	185	67
21. Westfield		1	4							5		28	15	10		25	20	43	132
Subtotal	180	5	18	3	1	1	1	11	1	84	1	205	71	51	5	1437	377	1469	580
MIDDLE THIRD																			
22. Lost Nation	70	4	5	2				2	2	30		77	15	11	1	13	135	217	214
23. North Linn			1						4	7		19	3	4		78	24	68	33
24. Cedar Rapids	185	2	44	7				18	10	39	1	132	25	8	3	6	145	1105	513
25. Iowa City	37	5	19	14	2	3	1	5	8	64		179	15	99			174	598	468
26. Amana	7	1	1	1			1	2	4	10		22	1	3		23	31	70	60
27. Cedar Falls	41	2	3	1	1			3	2	11	1	17	3	5	1	121	63	290	55
28. Marshalltown	15	1	1	2				6	15	1		64	13	2		8	50	91	101
29. Eldora-Union	29		2	1				1	4	14		16	3	2		159	50	61	60
30. Ames	65	1	7	3	2	3		8	4	35		114	18	8		91	146	8300	334
31. Alleman			2	1						7		21	6			49	19	173	38
32. Saylorville	2	10	29	5	5	2	1	7	6	70		158	19	39		2	150	561	366
33. Des Moines	3	1	1	2				3		16		62	2	10	1	73	32	10829	170
34. Boone Co.	22	13	9	4	1			9	65	101		119	49	21		75	293	468	465
35. Jamaica	5	6	15					1	41	15		36	6	7		567	109	122	95
36. Sac Co.	15		1						1	15		31	6	4		4	20	63	100
Subtotal	496	46	140	43	11	8	3	59	157	449	3	1067	184	163	6	1269	1441	23014	3072
SOUTHERN THIRD																			
37. Sigourney	15				13			1		7	1	16	8	1			42	77	86
38. Ottumwa	2							2	2	9		8	1	3		230	26	22	21
39. Oskaloosa										1		2	1	1			3		2
40. Rathbun	5	4	4	4	2	3		7	20	20		47	4	15		2	205	926	117
41. Red Rock L.	35		3	2		11		1	3	33	1	60	2	7		1	77	897	64
42. Lucas			2						16	5		16	3	4			63	88	40
43. Lamon			2							2		7	1	1			25	13	9
Subtotal	57	4	11	6	15	14	0	11	41	77	2	156	20	32	0	233	441	2023	339
Total	1488	119	257	89	38	23	4	113	280	1187	13	2538	494	530	54	6421	4087	61614	7290
	Mo Do	Ea Sc	Gr Ow	Ba Ow	Lo Ow	Sh Ow	No Ow	Be Ki	Re He	Re Wo	Ye Be	Dy Wo	Hy Wo	No Fl	Pl Wo	Ho La	Bl Ja	Am Cr	Bl Ca

Swaledale had a very cold count, daily temperature ranging from -14 to -8, while Decorah had the lowest low for the state at -22, compounded by a foot of snow.

The Middle Third as usual had the most counts at 15. Participation was excellent at Saylorville, Cedar Rapids, and Iowa City, contributing to the high species totals on those counts. All three had 12 or more field parties; the 18 parties and 41 observers at Cedar Rapids were both state highs.

Table 2 D. Christmas Bird Count Data

Location	Tu Ti	Re Br	Wh Br	Br Cr	Ca Wr	Wi Wr	Go Cr	Ea Bl	Am Ro	Ce Wa	No Sh	Lo Sh	Sh Sp	Eu St	No Ca	Ru Si	Am Tr	Fi Sp	Fo Sp
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																			
1. Yellow Riv. For.	12	1	48				2							116	290		24		
2. Dubuque	32	1	37	7										215	318		122	3	
3. Clinton	38		115	9	2	1	3	2	31	294				1475	310		713	1	
4. Princeton	31		91	15	3	1	10		5	9				1270	261		483		1
5. Davenport	45	3	192	96	3	2	34		1	171		1		3909	610	1	624		1
6. Muscatine	54	1	86	14		1	7	2	29	8	1			825	332		933	1	
7. Oakville	75	3	194	30	2	1	36	7	20	224				973	263		1107	8	
8. Burlington	39	3	53	13	5		19	6	7	27		1		2906	216		175		6
9. Keokuk	36	1	41	1	6		4	110	67	356				1134	312		944		
Subtotal	362	13	857	185	21	6	115	127	160	1089	1	1	1	12823	2912	1	5125	13	8
MISSOURI RIVER																			
10. Sioux City			34	6			1			25				296	45	1	318		
11. Omaha, NE	26		35	7	2	1	4	2	325	147				310	171		266		
12. Glenwood	10		30	2			11	6	254	175				447	122		147		
13. Shenandoah	6		19	1			4		277			7		613	87		303		
14. Tristate	15		31	5	3		6	25	227	41	1	2		250	182	2	535		
Subtotal	57	0	149	21	5	1	26	33	1083	388	1	9	0	1916	607	3	1569	0	0
NORTHERN THIRD																			
15. Decorah	4		48	2			2			80				153	295		40	2	1
16. Waterloo		1	6	1					1	8	1			72	31		16		
17. Mason City		2	56	3					3	21	4			605	66		160		
18. Swaledale			4											22	1		1		
19. Algona			24	1	1		1		1	10				69	27		174		
20. Cherokee			19					13	44	143	1			1161	31	2	418		
21. Westfield			46				3		1		3			163	24		136		
Subtotal	4	3	203	7	1	0	6	13	50	262	9	0	0	2245	475	2	945	2	1
MIDDLE THIRD																			
22. Lost Nation	35	2	84	8			20	5	4	1				800	325		640		
23. North Linn	9	1	11	1										61	36		17		
24. Cedar Rapids	95	3	143	11	6		9	3	1	106				1286	569		322		
25. Iowa City	70		149	7	5		22	12	8	88	1			1996	431		417		
26. Amana	3		20	5		1								20	53		24		
27. Cedar Falls		1	21	1			2		1	30	1			744	53		192		
28. Marshalltown	7		42	4						8				275	139		6		
29. Eldora-Union	4		28	1						31		1		126	58	1	74		
30. Ames	6		146	15			14		9	27		1		2340	180		241		
31. Alleman	2		16			2			1			1		350	31		5		
32. Saylorville	4		113	6			8	32	7	187	1	1		2059	257	2	686		
33. Des Moines	6		30	5					19		1			8743	108		157		
34. Boone Co.	41	2	194	1				29	1	81	1	1		1363	370		186		1
35. Jamaica	4		30	2			7	3	4	5				721	106		360		
36. Sac Co.			36				2			14				195	42		20		
Subtotal	286	9	1063	67	11	3	84	84	55	578	5	2	3	21079	2758	3	3347	0	1
SOUTHERN THIRD																			
37. Sigourney	3		27	1										328	87		25		
38. Ottumwa	7		1	2						24				73	109		271		
39. Oskaloosa			1	1										6	4				
40. Rathbun	30	1	35	1			10	4		57	1	4	1	365	120		371	1	
41. Red Rock L.	14		26	1			6	3	13	85				623	63		35		
42. Lucas	4		21				8		6	2	1			200	23		87		
43. Lamoni	2	1	7											213	7		155		
Subtotal	60	2	118	6	0	0	24	7	19	168	1	5	1	1808	413	0	944	1	0
Total	769	27	2390	286	38	10	255	264	1367	2485	17	17	5	39871	7165	9	11930	16	10
	Tu Ti	Re Br	Wh Br	Br Cr	Ca Wr	Wi Wr	Go Cr	Ea Bl	Am Ro	Ce Wa	No Sh	Lo Sh	Sh Sp	Eu St	No Ca	Ru Si	Am Tr	Fi Sp	Fo Sp
							Ki									To			

Boone County had the most feeder hours in the state (43), Cedar Rapids had the most feeder stations (18), and feeder hours were also high at Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Saylorville, however, had none, indicating that saturating a count circle with field parties can be effective in achieving good coverage.

In the Southern Third, Red Rock Lake improved markedly with better participation to tie with perennial leader Rathbun at 68 species. Oskaloosa had an interesting count: no field parties!

Table 2 E. Christmas Bird Count Data

Location	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th	Wh Cr	Ha Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo	Sn Bu	Re Wi	We Me	Me Sp	Ru Bl	Co Gr	Br He Co	Pu Fi	Ho Fi	Pi Si	Am Go	Ho Sp
MISSISSIPPI RIVER																			
1. Yellow Riv. For.						250				2			1		9		10	136	1276
2. Dubuque				1		393				26					47	13		187	654
3. Clinton	28	13	1	4		565	185	131	53				2	16	99	1	1	146	2150
4. Princeton	31	1		5		259	4	2	280	1		1	10	2	6	3		77	1709
5. Davenport	133	3	4	3		893			1506			5	5007	16	5	108	48	220	2281
6. Muscatine	19	2	1			741		2	17				3	1	54	54	5	166	2612
7. Oakville	43	5	1			581	4		1						49	17	1	171	1095
8. Burlington	22	4	6			576			83				2	3	12	65	46	126	1403
9. Keokuk	60	2	3	1		1209			2				1		118	9	1	371	3329
Subtotal	336	30	16	14	0	5467	193	135	1970	1	0	6	5026	38	399	270	112	1589	16509
MISSOURI RIVER																			
10. Souix City	2				35	88			3	1			2		3	43	11	81	475
11. Omaha, NE	9		1		59	512	55		2	28					9	1		243	1390
12. Glenwood	2		9		17	310	175		89	8	5	3			1	4		57	1921
13. Shenandoah	3	4	2	6	17	288			11	5	8	10						64	912
14. Tristate	17					53	970	575	1	11	17		1					66	1420
Subtotal	33	4	12	6	181	2168	805	1	93	25	58	13	16	0	13	84	11	511	6118
NORTHERN THIRD																			
15. Decorah	3		1			360		35	7						25	3	3	273	1643
16. Waterloo						121	15	2					3	1	2	22	32	685	
17. Mason City	2				1	611	212	129	7		8		5		16	28	7	83	2189
18. Swaledale						21		30							2		3	26	130
19. Algona					1	209	20		2		4	8			1	11	2	16	465
20. Cherokee	2				10	285	23	1	114		33	15			85	13	7	95	618
21. Westfield					1	58			44		7				2			27	167
Subtotal	7	0	1	0	13	1665	270	197	174	0	52	23	8	1	133	55	44	552	5897
MIDDLE THIRD																			
22. Lost Nation	23		1	2		230		2					2	1	1			59	1200
23. North Linn	1					55		6							34	5	1	75	250
24. Cedar Rapids	25		5	1		861					7		7		20	35	13	180	4325
25. Iowa City	117	2	4			752					1	2	45	24	31	23	195	4527	
26. Amana	1			2		90							26	6			3	16	200
27. Cedar Falls						259	35	5			3				2	17		7	1230
28. Marshalltown	3		5			180					6		2		6	45	5	78	916
29. Eldora-Union	4					178	22	1			5		5		7		19	80	573
30. Ames	23			1		633	300				9		2		4	6	3	153	3740
31. Alleman					3	178							1		2			12	350
32. Saylorville	24	4	5		1	991	253	1	3		19	1		8	31		3	291	2276
33. Des Moines	10		2			264				3			2		11	161		62	3204
34. Boone Co.	22	1	1		12	625		18	1		3		7		39			182	2832
35. Jamaica	25	1			3	380	114	2	60		1	35	1	1	6			131	703
36. Sac Co.					4	108	550				1		1		1			73	615
Subtotal	278	8	23	6	23	5784	1274	35	64	3	54	37	59	61	188	300	70	1594	26941
SOUTHERN THIRD																			
37. Sigourney			1	1		94					3							24	661
38. Ottumwa	11	3				199	35								25	2		26	187
39. Oskaloosa						5							15			12		20	50
40. Rathbun	13	2		2		282	33				4		1		93	32	2	223	1508
41. Red Rock L.	4	1		5	1	49		19			2		4		28	1	2	67	90
42. Lucas	3			1		66									10			48	152
43. Lamoni	4					47					9				46	6		14	86
Subtotal	35	6	1	9	1	742	68	19	0	0	18	0	20	0	202	53	4	422	2734
Total	689	48	53	35	218	15826	2610	387	2301	29	182	79	5129	100	935	762	241	4668	58199
	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th	Wh Cr	Ha Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo	Sn Bu	Re Wi	We Me	Me Sp	Ru Bl	Co Gr	Br He Co	Pu Fi	Ho Fi	Pi Si	Am Go	Ho Sp

REGULAR SPECIES

The big picture showed a rather ordinary year, with no invasions, no unusual concentrations or roosts (except possibly Ring-billed Gull and American Crow), and no significant numerical changes amongst the regularly occurring species.

Geese were plentiful at their usual concentration points, but dabbling ducks were found only in average numbers, a minor surprise given the abundance of open water.

Only Wood Duck reached a 10-year high, a rather unexciting 20 birds. This species has been seen more often in recent years in winter, possibly as it extends its breeding range north and west. Some diving ducks occurred in high numbers, most conspicuously the three merganser species. Each was at a 10-year high, with the 12,459 Commons eclipsing the previous high of 11,882, and 92 Hoodeds versus the previous best of 72. Even the usually scarce Red-breasted was common, with 337 counted. The 10-year average is only 36 per year, and several years none were found. The 65 Bufflehead was more than twice the previous 10-year high of 30 in 1987-88. Common Goldeneye was also near a 10-year high.

Raptor counts were generally on the high side. However, only Red-tailed Hawk set a 10-year high; this year's total of 1,285 was slightly higher than the 1,246 found in 1988-89. The 31 sharp-shins identified was close to a 10-year high, as was the total count of accipiters; 75 were found compared to the high of 80 in 1988-89.

Gallinaceous birds were a mixed bag (no pun intended). Ruffed Grouse was way down with only one recorded; the 10-year average is eight, and the high the 21 found in 1982-83. On the other hand, pheasants and turkeys again set 10-year highs.

A spectacular 10-year high of 48,201 Ring-billed Gulls was noteworthy, although Herring Gulls were present only in average numbers. Herring Gull numbers seem to peak later in the season than ring-bills, but movements of both species in late fall seem closely related to weather conditions.

Doves, owls, and woodpeckers all were in average numbers, although the total of 2,538 Downy Woodpeckers was near a 10-year high. Horned Lark was also in average to high numbers.

Corvids were plentiful, led by crows at a 10-year high of 61,614; half of these were at Keokuk, another 8,000 were at Ames, and 10,000 were at Des Moines. Imagine if crows came to feeders!

Chickadees, nuthatches, and Brown Creeper were found in average numbers except for Red-breasted Nuthatch, a cyclical species which was virtually absent with only 27 birds counted, a 10-year low. During the previous 10 count years, red-breasteds have ranged from a high of 164 in 1981-82 to this year's low of 27.

Last year we were concerned about Carolina Wren numbers. The concern was misplaced, as numbers this year reached a 10-year high of 38. The species obviously is doing well, and is able to survive extremely cold snaps, although we have not suffered prolonged cold in the last few winters. As might be expected, most Carolina Wrens were in the southern parts of Iowa, with 21 along the Mississippi, 5 in the southern Missouri River valley, and good counts of 6 at Cedar Rapids and 5 at Iowa City. The other individual was surprisingly far north at Algona, but keep in mind that the Algona count was held early in the count period prior to the cold late December weather.

The diverse muscicapid group (kinglets and thrushes) is always interesting on CBCs. This year, the 255 Golden-crowned Kinglets were near the 10-year high of 282, while the total of 264 Eastern Bluebirds was far above the 10-year average of 104. As expected, bluebirds were mostly in the south, with 110 at Keokuk and only 13 in the Northern Third, the latter all at Cherokee. Robins were in above average numbers and concentrated along the Missouri valley, where 1,083 of the total 1,367 were found.

Interestingly, the Cedar Waxwing was found in good numbers statewide. This contrasts with the western distribution of the other common fruit eater, the American Robin.

There were 17 individuals of each species of shrike identified, with Northern Cardinals further south than usual: singles were as far south as Muscatine, Rathbun, and Tristate. While a few Loggerheads were as far north as Ames and Saylorville, 14 of the 17 identified were in the Southern Third and extreme southern Missouri River valley.

Native sparrow numbers were generally average, but Northern Cardinals were near the high end of the 10-year range at 7,165. High was 8,055 last year. Cedar Rapids topped the state with 569 cardinals.

As noted above, Horned Larks were in good numbers, but Lapland Longspurs were everywhere, the 2,610 counted being the highest in the last 10 years. Best counts were 575 as far south as Tristate and 550 in Sac County. Strangely, Snow Bunting was scarce; the 387 found was only about half of the 10-year average, even though individuals were as far south as Tristate and Rathbun.

Blackbird reports were unremarkable, although only 100 Brown-headed Cowbirds were located. The 5,129 Common Grackles was a high total, but most, 5,007, were at Davenport.

The relative abundance of the two *Carpodacus* finches was again interesting, with House Finch about to outnumber Purple Finch for the first time. This year's count of 935 Purples was above average, exceeded in the last 10 years only by the 1,335 in 1985-86 and 1,007 in 1983-84. However an amazing 762 House Finches were reported, more than the 10-year average for Purples. This species has been on the CBC list only 5 years starting in 1986-87 when only two were found. Since then, yearly totals have been 33, 215, 378, and this year's 762.

The occurrence of the two crossbill species on Iowa CBCs is curious. Last year there were 38 White-wings and no Reds, and this year there were 23 Reds and no White-wings. In the count years 1982-83 through 1988-89 there was a total of only 2 reds and 6 white-wings prior to this year, but in 1981-82 there was an influx of 71 reds and 26 white-wings.

As usual, finches were unpredictable. After last year's amazing count of 453, Common Redpoll declined precipitously to only two birds, one each at Muscatine (surprisingly) and Sac County. Goldfinches were found in average numbers, but the extremely erratic Pine Siskin was scarce. Only 241 siskins were found, about a fifth of the 10-year average and far below last year's 2,678. Prior to that there were only 67 in 1988-89 but 2,006 in 1987-88. No Evening Grosbeaks were found, only the third time in the last 10 years we were skunked by this species.

UNCOMMON SPECIES

Table 3, listing those species found on three or fewer counts, reached record proportions this year, an exciting development for rare-bird enthusiasts. Leading the list are first-time-ever-on-the-Iowa-CBC species, of which there were at least three (or maybe four) this year: a Western Grebe at Red Rock Lake, an *Empidonax* sp. reported as a Least Flycatcher also at Red Rock Lake, and a Smith's Longspur at Clinton. Western Grebe and Smith's Longspur are not unexpected, but an *Empidonax* flycatcher definitely is, and will be ruled on by the Records Committee. Nevertheless, the bird was studied at length on at least two different days by an observer experienced at identification of out-of-range empids, and it was photographed. The maybe is the Yellow Grosbeak at Alleman. Mild weather obviously allowed this bird to survive. Because the bird was so far out-of-range, the Records Committee needs to decide if it was a wild bird.

Table 3. Species found on three or fewer Christmas Bird Counts, 1990-91. Number of individuals seen is in parentheses.

Eared Grebe	Rathbun (2)
Horned Grebe	Saylorville (2)
Western Grebe	Red Rock Lake (2)
American White Pelican	Burlington (1), Cedar Rapids (1), Saylorville (1)
Double-crested Cormorant	Davenport (10), Ames (1), Saylorville (16)
Swan sp	Saylorville (1)
Gr. White-fronted Goose	Jamaica (2)
Ross' Goose	Glenwood (2)
Blue-winged Teal	Davenport (1), Saylorville (2)
Northern Shoveler	Saylorville (2)
Greater Scaup	Davenport (1), Saylorville (3), Rathbun (1)
Oldsquaw	Keokuk (2)
Black Scoter	Rathbun (2)
Ruddy Duck	Princeton (3)
Golden Eagle	Yellow R. Forest (2), Saylorville (1), Des Moines (1)
Merlin	Tristate (1), North Linn (1)
Prairie Falcon	Omaha (10), Tristate (1)
Ruffed Grouse	Yellow River Forest (1)
Virginia Rail	Sioux City (1)
Sandhill Crane	Jamaica (1)
Franklin's Gull	Iowa City (1)
Bonaparte's Gull	Saylorville (4), Red Rock Lake (12)
Thayer's Gull	Saylorville (2), Red Rock Lake (3)
Glaucous Gull	Keokuk (1), Saylorville (1), Red Rock Lake (2)
Black-legged Kittiwake	Saylorville (3)
Snowy Owl	Swaledale (1)
Least Flycatcher	Red Rock Lake (1)
Black-billed Magpie	Sioux City (1)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Oakville (1), Glenwood (1)
Townsend's Solitaire	Clinton (1), Saylorville (1)
Hermit Thrush	Tristate (1), Westfield (1)
Varied Thrush	Mason City (1)
Gray Catbird	Cedar Rapids (1)
Northern Mockingbird	Burlington (2), Red Rock Lake (1)
Brown Thrasher	Keokuk (1), Cedar Rapids (1), Des Moines (1)
Bohemian Waxwing	Cherokee (1)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Clinton (1), Westfield (1), Iowa City (1)
Yellow Grosbeak	Alleman (1)
Vesper Sparrow	Ames (1)
Lincoln's Sparrow	Davenport (2), Oakville (1)
Smith's Longspur	Clinton (1)
Eastern Meadowlark	Glenwood (1)
Brewer's Blackbird	Muscatine (1)
Northern Oriole	Cedar Rapids (1)
Pine Grosbeak	Decorah (1)
Red Crossbill	Princeton (1), Cedar Falls (8), Saylorville (14)

Common Redpoll
European Tree Sparrow

Muscatine (1), Sac County (1)
Burlington (11), Keokuk (1)

In most years, second- or third-time CBC records would be unusual, but this year there were six of these: second records were provided by two Horned Grebes at Saylorville and a Virginia Rail at Sioux City, while third records were two Black Scoters at Rathbun, a Sandhill Crane at Jamaica, a Franklin's Gull (in breeding plumage) at Iowa City, and no fewer than three Black-legged Kittiwakes at Saylorville. If you want more, there were fourth record American White Pelicans scattered around with singles at Burlington, Cedar Rapids, and Saylorville. Also a fourth record (since the slate was wiped clean 10 years ago to require identification details of what is a rare winter species in Iowa) was Eastern Meadowlark at Glenwood. This was an unexpected westerly record, identified by plumage characters only, very difficult to do conclusively because of overlap in the two species. However two of the three features considered necessary for identification of winter Easterns: absence of yellow on cheeks and merged black tail bars, were seen. The third feature, a dark back, was not seen (see Wilson, IBL 53:83-87).

The Eared Grebes at Rathbun were a fifth record, as were a Northern Oriole at Cedar Rapids and Eurasian Tree Sparrows at Burlington and Keokuk. The tree sparrow at Keokuk was in Missouri, but the 11 at Burlington were in the reliable spot along the Mississippi River levee on Tama Road just north of Burlington and probably represent at least a consistent wintering population, if not an established breeding colony. Four of the five Eurasian Tree Sparrow records have been in the last 10 years.

Also of interest were three Blue-winged Teal, two at Saylorville and one at Davenport. These are the only records in the last 10 years, but records exist (surprisingly) for 14 prior years. This year's Varied Thrush at Mason City was the 11th CBC record, of which seven have been made in the last 10 years.

OTHER COMMENTS

No species were lost to this year's count due to insufficient documentation, a first for several years. Indeed, one species may be added, if the Records Committee accepts Yellow Grosbeak.

Larry Farmer of Westfield suggested that he would "pay a finder's fee" to anyone who could find a Loggerhead Shrike in his area, a feeling that probably applies to localities like Mason City and Decorah also. His point is that all shrikes in his area are Northern and don't need routine details to be counted as Northern. I have to agree, and will not require them. Nevertheless, reported Northern anywhere else will still need details to be accepted.

In general, documentation of observations was good this year, and I feel Iowa has a group of very good field observers doing our CBCs. We are building a reliable base of data for future researchers.

Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653

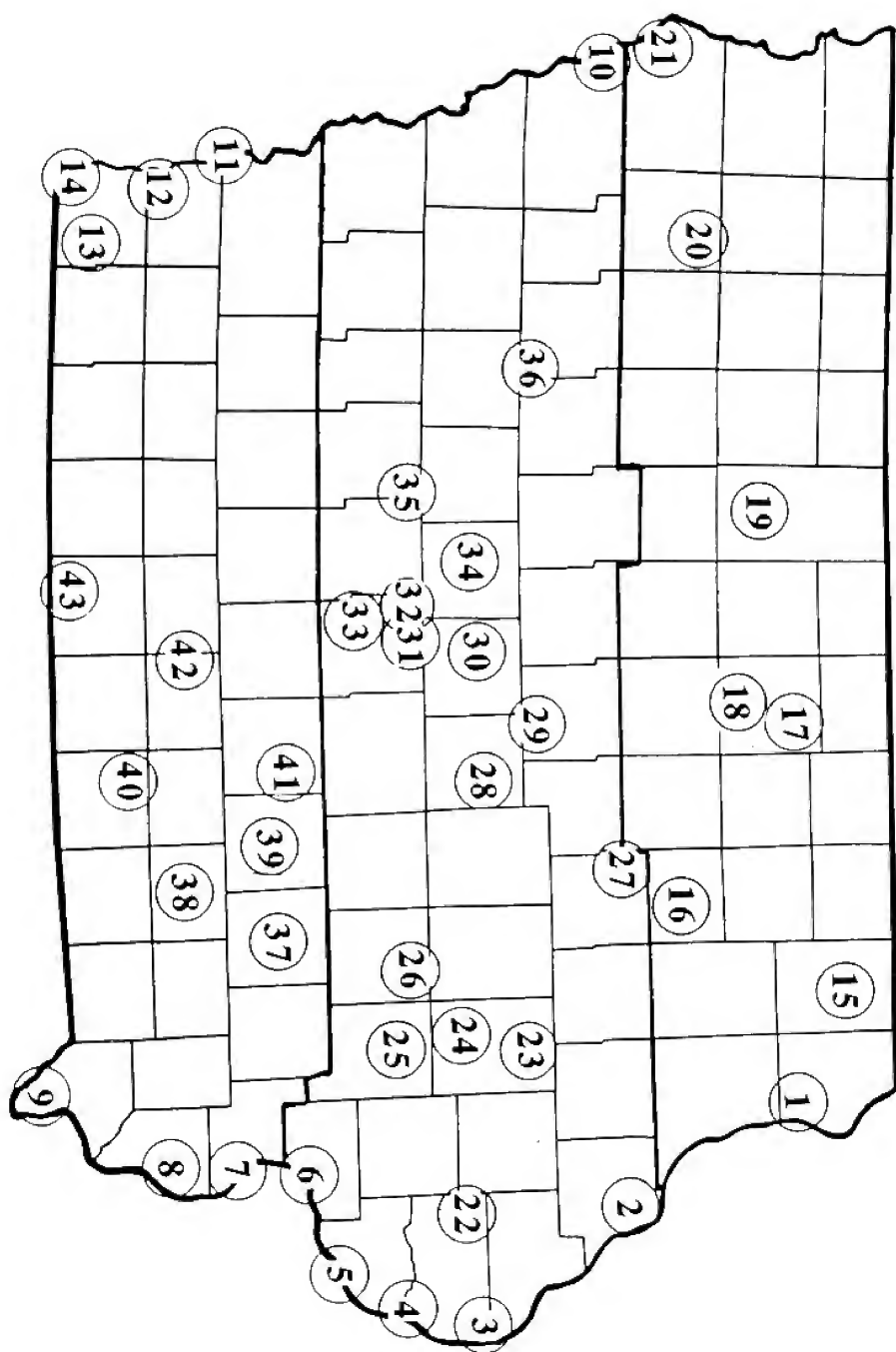


Figure 1. Location of Christmas Bird Counts, 1990-91.

FIELD REPORTS - WINTER 1990-91

W. ROSS SILCOCK



WEATHER

This winter could be described as generally warmer than normal, although there was a very cold period late in December which finally caused the large reservoirs to freeze. A significant warmup occurred during the first week of February, allowing an influx of waterbirds which was most noticeable in the Keokuk area. Most spring migrants were on schedule in the last week of February. A heavy snow fell over most of the state excepting the northwest in the first week of December, but the generally warmer weather conditions throughout the winter resulted in little snow accumulation in most places. Overall, the winter was conducive to survival of lingering birds, and several interesting records resulted.

GENERAL TRENDS

Among the three groups of birds of most interest in a winter report (waterfowl, raptors, and sparrows), numbers were generally average. The most noticeable phenomenon was the lingering of some species to set record or close to record late dates. This was true mostly amongst grebes and the earlier-migrating ducks.

UNUSUAL SPECIES

As in any season, there were a few unusual birds reported. The best find was Iowa's first Ivory Gull. Other rare birds for Iowa included two Great Black-backed Gulls, five Black-legged Kittiwakes, and a Black-billed Magpie. Birds that are not expected in winter include Virginia Rail, Least Sandpiper, Franklins Gull, an unidentified *Empidonax* flycatcher, and an unidentified tanager.

SPECIES DATA

* = documented, □ = record date, m.ob = many observers

Common Loon: Latest was 1 at Saylorville Res. 8 Dec (SJD), and as many as 3 were late on 2 Dec at Red Rock Res. (JLF).

Pied-billed Grebe: 1 at Cedar L., Linn Co., on 4 Jan (SJD) and 2 Feb (THK) apparently wintered as it did last year. Most unusual in midwinter was the pair at Brown's L., Woodbury Co., on 3 Feb (BFH).

Horned Grebe: Only report was of 2 rather late birds at Saylorville Res. 21 Dec (SJD).

Eared Grebe: 2 on Rathbun Res. 2-20 Dec, including the CBC, were very late (*RLC) [3rd latest].

Western Grebe: 2 at Red Rock Res. until 16 Dec, were very late [2nd latest] and were counted on the CBC.

American White Pelican: At least 1 of 2 at Saylorville Res. was injured, possibly explaining their remaining through the very late date of 21 Dec (SJD) [3rd latest]. Another was late at Red Rock Res. 1 Dec (AMJ). 2 others were reported on CBCs.

Double-Crested Cormorant: Midwinter records are rare, but 1 was at Keokuk 27 Jan (THK, JLF), 2 lingered as late as 21 Dec at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and, a little more unusual, 1 was at Ames on the late "inland" date of 20 Dec (SJD).

Great Blue Heron: This species is unusual in midwinter, but 1 was at Keokuk 19 Jan (SJD), another was at Red Rock Res. 1 Jan (AMJ), and 2 were at Rathbun Res. 26 Jan (TNJ). 1 or 2

- apparently wintered successfully along the Iowa R. in Iowa City (JLF), possibly the same individuals seen at Coralville Res. 12 Jan and 1 Feb (THK).
- Tundra Swan:** Up to 4 were reported wintering at Keokuk from 3 Jan, a single (*SJD), to 8 Feb, 2 birds (*SJD). No documentation was received to justify the count of four birds, however. An adult was in the Iowa City area with Trumpeters (see below) from 2 Jan (JLF) through Feb (*THK, RPi). The yellow spot on its bill was seen (PAI, RAI). This species is very rare in midwinter in Iowa.
- Trumpeter Swan:** At least 4 or possibly 5 appeared, although a report from West Okoboji L. 16-17 Dec of 1 with orange wing tags (fide DCH) may have been 1 of the pair with orange or red wing tags (one #134) at Iowa City 2 Jan through Feb (*THK, RPi, JLF). Another pair, 1 with wing tag #125, was near Hendrickson M. 19-23 Feb (fide HZ). These birds are apparently from the established Minnesota population, individuals from which in recent years regularly migrate south to winter.
- Mute Swan:** To complete a good swan winter, up to 5 apparently wild adults were at Keokuk 19 Jan (SJD) through mid-Feb (RPi, m.ob.). This species is rare in Iowa in fall and winter, probably dispersing from the Great Lakes population. Away from the Mississippi R. the possibility of domesticated birds or escapees increases greatly.
- Greater White-fronted Goose:** 2 at Bay's Branch, Guthrie Co., on 18 Dec on the Jamaica CBC were very late. The only other fall straggler was 1 at DeSoto N.W.R. 1 Dec (SJD). Returning spring migrants were led by a large group of 340 at Riverton W.A. 24 Feb (SJD). The 7 at Saylorville Res. 27 Feb were rather far east for this species (SJD).
- Snow Goose:** Large flocks in the west departed earlier than in recent years, with 420,000 at DeSoto N.W.R. 1 Dec but only 150,000 there 12 Dec (fide SJD). The only report of wintering was 1 below Red Rock Dam, a rather easterly report (SJD). Another remained through 24 Dec at Rathbun Res. (SJD), and 1 was at Saylorville Res. through 20 Dec (SJD). Such single birds well to the east of the species' usual western Iowa range may be impaired or possibly escapees (note a similar report of 1 at Red Rock Res. 13 Jan last year). Small flocks do move through C. Iowa, however, as evidenced by an early 12 on 14 Feb in Story Co (fide SJD) and three flocks of 5-20 birds in Madison Co. 21 Feb (SJD). The major influx in the usual W Iowa corridor began with 10,000 birds at Riverton W.A. 24 Feb (SJD).
- Ross' Goose:** With patience, large numbers can be counted amongst Snow Geese. Possibly a state high winter count was 56 at DeSoto N.W.R. 1 Dec (SJD). Bay's Branch had 2 on 27 Feb (SJD), and 1 was on the Glenwood CBC.
- Canada Goose:** This species winters throughout Iowa, the largest flocks being 900 along the Des Moines R. below Red Rock Dam (SJD), 340 at Bay's Branch (SJD), and 200+ at Coralville Res. (THK). Also 600 at Keokuk 3 Jan (SJD) and 600 at Ottumwa 2 Jan (SJD) probably were wintering. Large numbers of fall migrants were in C. Iowa with 1,550 at Rathbun Res. 24 Dec (SJD). The last week of February saw spring migrants returning in numbers beginning 20-21 Feb in SE and C. Iowa (DCP, SJD) and with hundreds over Algona 21 Feb (MCK). Large counts of 1,725 on 27 Feb at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 6,000 the same day at Bay's Branch (SJD) indicated a major movement. Earliest migrants were seen 9-10 Feb at Hendrickson M. (SJD) and 10 Feb at Otter Creek P., Warren Co. (JSi).
- Wood Duck:** As usual in recent years, a few birds wintered in SE Iowa: up to 3 were at Cedar L., Cedar Rapids (THK, SJD, JLF), and 1 or 2 were in the Bettendorf area (PCP). However, none wintered at the usual Rock Valley location in extreme NW Iowa (JV).
- Green-winged Teal:** Small groups overwinter most years when conditions allow, although 20 as far northwest as Brown's L. on 3 Feb were unexpected (BFH). More usual were 8 at the IPL Ponds in Pottawattomie Co. 11 Jan (SJD) and 1 at Cedar L. on 4 Jan (SJD) and 2 Feb (THK).
- American Black Duck:** The usual scattered wintering birds were reported. Best counts were 2 at Cedar L. 4 Jan (SJD), 8 at Bettendorf throughout the period (PCP), and 3 wintering at Bay's Branch (SJD). A high count was 14-16 birds below Red Rock Dam 24-28 Dec (AMJ, SJD).
- Mallard:** Best counts of wintering birds were 3,000+ on the 2 miles of Des Moines R. below Red Rock Dam (SJD), 2,000 at Brown's L. on 3 Feb (BFH), and 900 at Bay's Branch (SJD). Large fall concentrations of 25,000+ were reported 1 Dec at DeSoto N.W.R. (SJD) and 9-20 Dec at Saylorville Res. (SJD).
- Northern Pintail:** A few individuals wintered; 4 were at Ottumwa 2 Jan (SJD), Cedar L. 4 Jan (SJD) and 2 Feb (THK), and below Red Rock Dam (SJD). A pair was far northwest at Brown's L. 3 Feb (BFH). Spring migrants returned in late February with large numbers present by 24 Feb when 3,000 were at Riverton W.A. (SJD).

- Blue-winged Teal:** Very rare in December, a female was at Bettendorf 16-31 Dec (*PCP), and 2 males were at Saylorville Res. through 22 Dec, 1 crippled (*SJD). All were counted on local CBCs.
- Northern Shoveler:** As expected, none were found in midwinter, and only 2 were found on CBCs. Earliest spring migrants were 3 at Riverton W. A. 24 Feb (SJD). This is perhaps the rarest of Iowa's regular dabbling ducks in winter.
- Gadwall:** Uncommon to rare in winter, a few apparently overwintered this year, including up to 3 below Red Rock Dam (SJD, THK, JLF), and 4 or 5 at Brown's L. 3 Feb (BFH). 1 at Ankeny on 11 Jan (SJD) was unusual. 3 at Keokuk on 8 Feb (SJD) and 2 at Clear L. on 12 Feb (SJD) were early migrants.
- American Wigeon:** Also very rare in midwinter, 1 wintered below Red Rock Dam (SJD), and another was with the wintering Mallard flock at IPL Ponds 11 Jan (SJD). 4 at Saylorville Res. 21 Feb (SJD) were early spring migrants.
- Canvasback:** A few may have wintered at Keokuk where 11 were counted 19 Jan (SJD). None were at Montrose 8 Feb so 212 there 9 Feb were considered migrants (SJD) as were 50 there 20 Feb (RIC). 1 on a farm pond kept open by geese near Corydon 15 Feb (TNJ) was unexpected and probably an early migrant. 8 migrants were at IPL Ponds on 24 Feb (SJD).
- Redhead:** Rare in midwinter, 2 or 3 were found throughout the period at Keokuk (SJD, THK, JLF), and 1 or 2 were below Red Rock Dam 30 Dec and 1 Jan (MPR, SJD). Early migrants were 2 on 9 Feb at Montrose (SJD), while in the west the first were 2 at IPL Ponds 22 Feb (DLR).
- Ring-necked Duck:** The only midwinter report was 1 seen 3, 19 Jan at Keokuk (SJD). 1 at Montrose 9 Feb (SJD) was probably an early migrant. A female at Coralville 16 Dec was thought to be the same bird that was there last year 31 Dec (THK).
- Greater Scaup:** Rare in winter, single females were seen at Keokuk on 19 Jan (SJD), and below Red Rock Dam, on 30 Dec (SJD) and 1 Jan (AMJ). No spring migrants were reported.
- Lesser Scaup:** The 6 at Keokuk on 19 Jan (SJD) may have wintered. Another was found below Saylorville Dam 1 Jan (fide SJD). Migrants appeared early on 9 Feb when 6 were found at Montrose (SJD), and as expected, 23 Feb, in Appanoose Co. (RLC) and at Riverton W.A. 24 Feb (SJD).
- Oldsquaw:** Apart from the 2 found on the Keokuk CBC, there was only one report: 1, possibly a young male, at Red Rock Res. 1 Dec (MPR, AMJ).
- Black Scoter:** 2 females on the Rathbun CBC on the late date of 15 Dec (*RLC, *PAE) [2nd latest]. were also a first county record for Appanoose Co. There were no other reports, other than a late report of a juvenile shot 4 Nov on Ventura M., Cerro Gordo Co. (*TGL).
- White-winged Scoter:** The only report was of a male seen 12-16 Jan at Davenport (PCP, m.ob.). This species is very rare in midwinter.
- Common Goldeneye:** Largest wintering flocks were 600-700 at Keokuk 3-19 Jan (SJD), and 23-50 on IPL Ponds 19 Jan-10 Feb (TEB). Best fall count was 1,100 at Saylorville Res. 19 Dec (SJD), while in spring an excellent count of 1,200 early migrants were at Montrose 8-9 Feb (SJD). 1 at Clear L. on 12 Feb (SJD) was unexpected.
- Bufflehead:** A few attempted to winter, although only a male at Bettendorf 1 Feb (PCP) may have been successful. Fall birds lingered until 4 Jan, with 2 on that date at Davenport (SJD), 1 until 3 Jan below Saylorville Res. Dam (SJD), and 1 through 2 Jan below Red Rock Dam (SJD, m.ob.). 1 at Keokuk 9 Feb (SJD) was probably a migrant as were singles 27 Feb on the Cedar R. in Johnson and Linn counties (RPI) and Saylorville Res. (SJD). As many as 35 were still at Saylorville Res. 8 Dec (SJD).
- Hooded Merganser:** Expected in winter on open water, a female was below Red Rock Dam through 1 Jan (MPR, AMJ), up to 3 males were at Keokuk through 27 Jan (THK), and 1 or 2 were at Cedar L. through 2 Feb (THK, RPI). 18 counted at Saylorville Res. on 19 Dec (SJD) was more than usual for so late a date. Usually open water is unavailable on this date.
- Common Merganser:** The largest wintering group was 23 below Red Rock Dam (SJD), although 25 at IPL Ponds 10 Feb (TEB) may have been wintering also, as were 20 at the Lansing Power Plant 25 Jan (THK). Numbers increased to 700 below Red Rock Dam 8 Feb (SJD) and 300 at Lansing Power Plant 10 Feb (FLe) as migrants arrived. Highest late fall counts at major reservoirs were 450 on 19 Dec at Coralville Res. (THK), 8,000 the same day at Saylorville Res. (SJD), and 1,300 on 24 Dec at Rathbun Res. (SJD). Best early spring count was 1,200 at Saylorville Res. 27 Feb (SJD).
- Red-breasted Merganser:** Very rare in midwinter, a well-described female at Keokuk 3 Jan (SJD) was noteworthy. Unusually large numbers remained into December (see CBCs).
- Ruddy Duck:** The only reports received were of 3 at Princeton on the CBC and 1 on 1 Dec at DeSoto N.W.R. (SJD). There are only two January records for this species.

- Turkey Vulture:** An early migrant at Montrose 9 Feb was well described (SJD). No others were reported, and none were found on CBCs.
- Bald Eagle:** This species now is perhaps Iowa's third most common winter raptor. It is found statewide, with significant concentrations at reservoirs and major rivers or where waterfowl concentrate. CBC data should be consulted for early winter distribution. A significant concentration was at Lansing Power Plant, where 162 were counted 3 Feb (FLe) and 140 on 25 Jan (THK). There were 203 at Keokuk 27 Jan (THK), part of a total of 680 along the Mississippi R. 25-27 Jan from Allamakee to Lee counties (THK). High proportions of immatures indicate successful breeding, such as 41 of 68 birds at Riverton W.A. 24 Feb (SJD) and 106 of 205 at Davenport in Dec (PCP).
- Northern Harrier:** Numbers were good throughout the period in SC Iowa (JSi), and good counts were made, including 15 at one location in Clarke Co. on 15 Dec (JSi), 6 on 13 Jan in Decatur and Wayne counties (JSi), and 6 the same day in Clarke, Lucas, and Wayne counties (BLB). Mid-January numbers are usually low, with most birds not returning until February (AMJ); for example 5 at one location 20 Feb in Tama Co. (MPr).
- Sharp-shinned Hawk:** As expected, a few were reported statewide throughout the period.
- Cooper's Hawk:** As for sharp-shins, a few were reported statewide throughout the period, although numbers reported were greater than those for sharp-shins, the reverse of CBC data.
- Northern Goshawk:** Apart from the 4 reported on CBCs, 2 others were found: an undescribed immature said to have been at Cardinal M. 11 Nov through 11 Dec (DC), and an immature on the ISU campus 9-12 Feb (fide JJD). The latter bird was not the same as the Ames CBC bird, which was an adult.
- Red-shouldered Hawk:** Only 3 were reported other than the 6 on CBCs. One has wintered in the same area w. of Union in Hardin Co. since 1988 and was seen again this year (MPr). Another was in an Ames yard 2-3 Feb (JJD, SJD), while a third was n. of Bellevue 26 Jan (THK).
- Red-tailed Hawk:** Some high totals were reported from the south and east, such as 162 in 3 days from Allamakee to Lee counties, including 66 on 25 Jan (THK), and 47 on 19 Jan in 150 miles in SC Iowa (JSi). A Harlan's form was near Colfax 2 Feb (AMJ), and a Krider's form was in Monroe Co. (no details) around 27 Dec (RPi).
- Rough-legged Hawk:** This species was noticeably common statewide this year. In NC Iowa it was "much more common than the last 2 years" (MCK), and a good count was made of 13 on 15 Dec in Lucas and Clarke counties (JSi).
- Golden Eagle:** The only reports other than CBCs came from the regular Allamakee Co. wintering area where an adult and an immature were seen 25 Jan (THK, JLF).
- American Kestrel:** Data from two counts in W Iowa were similar: in NW Iowa there were 2-3 birds per 10 miles throughout the period (JV), while 41 were counted over 175 miles on 24 Feb in SW Iowa (SJD).
- Merlin:** This species is regular in W Iowa in winter, and at least 2 or 3 are seen each year in NW Iowa (JV). Reports were received as far east as the U. of Iowa campus on 1 Dec (JLF). Another was near Monroe 17 Feb (EIA, EuA), and a female of the pale Richardson's race was documented from Ames 31 Jan (*SJD).
- Peregrine Falcon:** Convincing details were received of 1 at Mason City 28 Feb (*JLW), possibly an early migrant moving north with waterfowl. Another report was not as well documented and was referred to the Records Committee.
- Prairie Falcon:** Like Merlin, this species is regular in winter, at least in W Iowa. Including CBCs, at least 10 reports were received of birds as far southeast as Clio, Wayne Co. on 13 Jan (*JLF).
- Gray Partridge:** Reports were from the northern half of the state, as far east as Dubuque, where 7 were seen 25 Jan (THK), and Allamakee Co. where 6 were seen 27 Jan (RLC). Snow cover resulted in large flocks in Grundy Co. (MPr).
- Ring-necked Pheasant:** In Kossuth Co. deep snow may have caused numbers to dwindle (MCK).
- Wild Turkey:** Apparently doing so well in NW Iowa that it is becoming a pest in western suburbs of Sioux City (fide JV); the winter may have been severe enough in Kossuth Co. to have caused one to die from starvation (MCK).
- Northern Bobwhite:** 20+ wintered successfully as far northwest as Oak Grove S.P., Sioux Co., (JV).
- Virginia Rail:** One of the more amazing records this winter was of 1 found on the Sioux City CBC 29 Dec in a still unfrozen marsh at Brown's L. (*RBL). This is only the 2nd Iowa winter record, the other 30 Jan 1955, and there are no other records between 26 Nov and 17 Apr.

- American Coot:** Surprisingly few were reported, the latest being 1 at Saylorville Res. through 21 Dec (SJD), except for a misguided loner which apparently wintered at Cedar L. at least through 2 Feb (THK, RPi, SJD).
- Sandhill Crane:** There were two reports of this now regular but rare winter visitor: an adult found on the Jamaica CBC was present from 7-21 Dec (fide SJD), and another, also an adult, was at DeSoto N.W.R. 30 Nov-1 Dec (SJD).
- Killdeer:** Several remained into December, the latest at Keokuk 29 Dec (SJD). Returning birds were noted 21 Feb in Madison Co. (SJD), 22 Feb when 4 were near Keokuk (JLF), and 23 Feb in Appanoose Co. (RLC). 1 at Montrose on 8 Feb was associated with a major influx of waterbirds and was considered an early migrant (SJD).
- Least Sandpiper:** Iowa's latest ever by some 9 days was 1 at Saylorville Res. (with 6 Dunlin) on 2 Dec (*SJD) [record latest].
- Dunlin:** The 6 seen on 2 Dec. is the 4th December record of Dunlin from Saylorville Res. area in the last 5 years (*SJD) [ties 2nd latest].
- Common Snipe:** The only wintering birds detected were at Slater 16 Dec-14 Jan (SJD) and in Boone Co. throughout the period (SJD).
- Franklin's Gull:** An adult in breeding plumage was at Saylorville Res. 1 Feb (*SJD). As noted by SJD, "Something must be wrong with this species. This is the third winter in a row that 1 or 2 have appeared at Saylorville Res. in winter. The birds seem to show up a considerable time after the first hard freeze, i.e., Jan/early Feb. Also, they show up at a time when other gulls are scarce or absent. This year the individual was the first gull I had seen since 22 Dec. It probably arrived on the leading edge of the warm weather of 2-9 Feb. STRANGE!!!" Another, also in breeding plumage, was at Coralville Res. 16 Dec (*THK, *CJB) on the Iowa City CBC. This is the 2nd latest fall record, except for four winter records, all in the last four winters.
- Bonaparte's Gull:** This species lingered in larger numbers than usual, presumably due to extensive open water on the reservoirs. At Saylorville Res. there were still 107 on 2 Dec, the latest 1 on 19 Dec (SJD), while at Red Rock Res. there were 400+ on 1 Dec and as many as 175 on 16 Dec (AMJ). Remarkable was an adult at Keokuk on 29 Dec (RIC), the 2nd latest ever by 2 days.
- Ring-billed Gull:** While probably an average year for this species, the peak of 35,000+ at Saylorville Res. on 8 Dec (SJD) was spectacular. There were still 10,000+ as late as 19 Dec (SJD). Numbers peaked at 700+ at Coralville Res. 14 Dec (THK). A notable early spring influx was seen at Keokuk where 1,600 were found 8-9 Feb (SJD) and at Red Rock Dam where 51 were counted 9 Feb; none were present there in Jan (AMJ). A few wintered at Keokuk, where 46 were found 19 Jan (SJD).
- Herring Gull:** Far fewer were noted than the preceding species; the peak at Saylorville Res. was only 600 on 19 Dec (SJD). There were almost as many at Coralville Res. (in contrast with Ring-billed Gull), with 300+ on 14 Dec (THK). 2 were at Coralville Res. 1 Feb (THK), possibly brought there by the warm weather system which brought the Franklin's Gull to Saylorville Res. 2 Herring Gulls at Ottumwa 18 Jan were unusual (SJD).
- Thayer's Gull:** Only 1 was reported in addition to the 5 found on CBCs: an immature at Keokuk 16 Feb (*RAI).
- Lesser Black-backed Gull:** 1 reported at Davenport 16 Jan. was identified by another observer as a Western Gull; both reports are referred to the Records Committee. Another putative Lesser Black-Backed at Red Rock Dam and reported on the Iowa Bird Line appears to have been a Herring Gull (*THK).
- Western Gull:** See preceding species.
- Glaucous Gull:** All reports were from major reservoirs and the Keokuk area in late fall through 19 Jan, when a 1st-winter bird was at Keokuk (SJD). Best counts were 3 at Saylorville Res. 8 Dec (SJD), and 3 at Red Rock Res. 12-18 Dec (RLC, AMJ). All were 1st-winter birds.
- Great Black-backed Gull:** Two appeared this winter. A 2nd-winter bird was at Bettendorf 14-17 Jan (*THK, *JLF). This bird was described as very large, apparently a different bird from the controversial individual variously identified as a Lesser Black-backed or Western (above). Another, apparently a 3rd-winter bird, was at Keokuk 7-8 Feb (*SJD, *AMJ).
- Black-legged Kittiwake:** This was an outstanding winter for this species. What has to be a record count was the 4 1st-winter birds at Saylorville Res. 9 Dec, with at least 1 present 10 Nov-20 Dec (*SJD). Another, perhaps 1 of the above, was below Red Rock Dam 24 Dec-9 Jan (*AMJ, *m.ob.), unfortunately eclipsed by its proximity to the next bird, although it established a record late date.
- Ivory Gull:** Without doubt the bird of the season, a 1st-year bird was found below Red Rock Dam on 24 Dec (*SJD). Several Christmas morning family gatherings were disturbed as the bird was subsequently observed by many people through 1 Jan (*JLF, *AMJ, *m.ob.).

- Mourning Dove:** 3 wintered in a Mason City yard, and surprisingly were joined by 12 more 28 Feb (JLW), a northerly winter location for this species.
- Snowy Owl:** About 9 were reported this winter. 1 near Hull, Sioux Co. 7 Dec (fide DCH) was the earliest. Many observers saw 1 rather far south at Clio 12-27 Jan (RLC, m.ob.). The only adult reported was near Clear L. 20 Feb (fide RGo).
- Long-eared Owl:** Largest group discovered was 10+ se. of Osceola 3 Feb (THK). Fewer than usual were at Big Creek S.P. Dec-Jan, where only 3 were found (SJD).
- Short-eared Owl:** More than usual were reported, and most remained throughout the winter, probably due to mild weather, less snow cover, and the Cons. Reserve Program. Up to 20 wintered in a field near Lamoni (fide SJD), 12 were seen 31 Jan at Iowa City (fide RIC), and 8-10 were e. of Agency, Wapello Co., in early Jan (fide JJD).
- Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Highest counts were 10 wintering in Boone Co. (SJD), 4 in a pine grove in Hardin Co. 19 and 26 Jan (MPr), and 3 wintering in Polk Co. (SJD). An unusual location, away from the expected Iowa sites, was 1 seen at Mason City on 25-26 Jan (RGo, CJP).
- Belted Kingfisher:** The only midwinter report was 1 in Boone Co. 7 and 9 Jan (SRL).
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** Numbers varied depending on location, from scarce in general (THK), to "quite common" in the Algona area (MCK).
- Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Reported as "doing well" in NW Iowa, where it is least numerous in the state (JV).
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Wintering birds are uncommon in Iowa, especially as far north as Mason City, where an imm wintered at a feeder (RGo). Another was also rather far north in a Marshalltown yard 28 Dec-31 Jan (fide MPr).
- Hairy Woodpecker:** Reported as scarce in NW Iowa, 1 for every 25 downies (JV). See CBCs for statewide data.
- Northern Flicker:** An indication of early spring movement was the first sighting at Fairfield 7 Feb (DCP).
- Pileated Woodpecker:** A male and female were seen at least 8 times along the Des Moines R. s of Algona (MCK) near the northwest edge of its Iowa range.
- Empidonax sp.:** An empid identified as a Least Flycatcher was found on the Red Rock Lake CBC 16 Dec. The bird was seen 16 and 18 Dec in the Whitebreast Recreation Area by several observers and carefully studied (*TSc). The documentation has been submitted to the Records Committee. This is an amazing record, perhaps approaching the Ivory Gull in terms of unexpectability. The previous latest empid record for Iowa is a Least Flycatcher on 16 Oct 1949.
- Horned Lark:** Northward movement was detected in Winneshiek Co. 9 Feb (DC).
- Black-billed Magpie:** One report was received of this rare species: 1 was flying across I-29 near the Floyd Monument on the Sioux City CBC (*RBL). He noted that there had been several nests in Dakota Co., Nebraska, fewer than 10 miles away.
- American Crow:** The roost on the Iowa State U. campus at Ames reached its greatest size yet with 8,300 birds counted for the CBC (JJD).
- Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Numbers were low, with mostly singles and only at feeders. Best counts were of only 2 birds, at both a Mason City (RGo) and an Atlantic feeder (EIA, EuA).
- Brown Creeper:** Most northwesterly report was of "the usual 6 or so" wintering at Oak Grove S.P., Sioux Co. (JV).
- Carolina Wren:** Numbers were good, indicating they survived last winter's cold snaps. Rick Hollis kindly provided data from the Feeder Survey, which yielded 22 birds at 19 feeders, all s of a line from Dubuque to Shelby counties (RJH). The only report from n. of this line was 1 at a feeder at Call S.P. 1-24 Dec, at which time the ranger went on vacation, as did the feeder, and apparently the bird (MCK).
- Winter Wren:** 1 was at Yellow River Forest in NE Iowa as late as 25 Jan (THK).
- Golden-crowned Kinglet:** Northwestern-most report was of 8 at Oak Grove S.P., Sioux Co. on 14 Dec (JV).
- Eastern Bluebird:** Numbers were good this winter, especially in SC Iowa, where 200 were counted in Van Buren Co. 27 Jan (JLF). Most northerly report was of 4 wintering n. of Ellsworth, Hamilton Co. (JRH). Many were migrating in C Iowa by 21 Feb (SJD).
- Townsend's Solitaire:** 2 were reported on CBCs, at Clinton and Saylorville. The former was in Illinois. The latter was seen on 16 Dec (*LPH), and remained until 3 Jan (m.ob.). 2 others were discovered: 1 was at Hickory Hills Area, Woodbury Co. 23 Feb (*BFH) and the other at Pony Creek, Mills Co. 9 Feb (photo DLR). This species is regular in Iowa in winter in very small numbers.
- Hermit Thrush:** None were reported in addition to the 2 found on CBCs.

- American Robin:** As expected, most reports were from S Iowa, although 1 was at Oak Grove S.P. 8 Feb, where the species is usually absent in winter (JV). Best counts were the est. 500 in Van Buren Co. 27 Jan (JLF) and the 300+ at Oak Hill Cemetery, Council Bluffs on 28 Jan (DLR).
- Varied Thrush:** 2 appeared this winter, both in N Iowa. 1 was found on the Mason City CBC, while the other, a male, was at a Spencer feeder 26 Nov-28 Jan (fide JLF). This species, like Townsend's Solitaire, is regular but rare in winter.
- Gray Catbird:** The only report was of 1 on the Cedar Rapids CBC (*RBr).
- Northern Mockingbird:** 1 wintered below Red Rock Dam (AMJ, m.ob.). Another was near Milton, Van Buren Co. 9 Jan (fide JJD), and a third was rather far north at Elkhart on 1 Dec (PAI, RAI). The only other report was on the Burlington CBC.
- Brown Thrasher:** Including CBCs, some 8 individuals apparently wintered. Most were at feeders in the southern half of Iowa, north to Clive (JRC), but 1 was a real surprise at a Sioux Center feeder 22 Dec-6 Feb, described as "demented and unhappy" (JV).
- Bohemian Waxwing:** Only 2 were reported, apart from 1 on the Cherokee CBC: 1 was with Cedar Waxwings at Saylorville Res. 9 Dec (AMJ), and another was seen by Yellow Grosbeak viewers near Elkhart 9 Dec (DLR, PAI, RAI).
- Cedar Waxwing:** Just an average year for this species, the largest flock was 200 in Van Buren Co. 2 Feb (RLC).
- Northern Shrike:** Fair numbers were found, with most in the northern half of Iowa, although 1 was far south at Moravia, Appanoose Co. (TNJ), and another about as far south in Lucas Co. (SJD).
- Loggerhead Shrike:** Most left the state this year, except for a few in southern counties. 1 near Elkhart (MPR) and another in Madison Co. (EIA, EuA) were the furthest north.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler:** 6 individuals were found; 3 on CBCs including 1 surprisingly far north in Plymouth Co. (Westfield CBC). The other 3 birds were seen together in Van Buren Co. 27 Jan (THK, JLF). This species is rare in winter.
- anager species:** An excellent record regardless of the species; photos and documentation have been referred to the Records Committee.
- Northern Cardinal:** Some interesting information came from NW Iowa where this species is still scarce enough to be noteworthy: it is doing well along streams and rivers, but is virtually absent in towns (JV); at Kettleson Hogsback WMA 7 were at feeders, providing the "largest count at one site in area ever" (DCH).
- Yellow Grosbeak:** Definitely the most intriguing record for the period, an apparent juvenile male appeared at Dean Mosman's feeder e of Elkhart 24 Nov and remained until 7 Jan (DDM, *m.ob.). More than 400 visitors saw the bird, including observers from NJ, OK, and MD. The Records Committee has the unenviable task of deciding if this was truly a wild bird.
- Dickcissel:** Brief details were provided of 1 which appeared at a Madison Co. feeder 3 Dec (*EIA, EuA). Apart from three winter records, this is the latest ever fall record.
- Rufous-sided Towhee:** The only report apart from CBCs was a western race bird wintering at a Norwalk feeder (SJS).
- Chipping Sparrow:** One report was received for what would be the latest record except for one winter record. The report was referred to the Records Committee.
- Vesper Sparrow:** 1 was found in Story Co. on the Ames CBC (*SJD). This is north and west of the species' usual winter range, where even there it is at best a rare bird.
- Song Sparrow:** An excellent winter count was of 100+ in a grass field near Tiffin, Johnson Co., 16 Dec (JLF).
- Swamp Sparrow:** Unexpected so far north and west in midwinter was 1 at Brown's L. 3 Feb (BFH), but perhaps not so surprising considering that a Virginia Rail was there in late December (above).
- Harris' Sparrow:** Three reports were received from SC Iowa where the species is not a common wintering bird: 4 wintered in a Norwalk yard (AMJ); 6 were in a Lucas Co. yard 31 Dec (BLB); and 3 were seen 26 Jan-10 Feb in a Mystic, Appanoose Co., yard were the first ever seen in the area by the observer (TNJ).
- Dark-eyed Junco:** A few individuals of the Oregon race were reported; this race is uncommon in Iowa: 1 at Sioux Center feeders throughout (JV), 1 at Fairfield feeders 18 Feb (DCP), and 1 at Iowa City 23 Dec (RPI).
- Lapland Longspur:** Flocks were found statewide, the largest the 300 in Appanoose Co. (RLC) and 200 in Jasper Co. 26 Dec (JLF).
- Smith's Longspur:** 1 was found near Almont on the Clinton CBC (*BBI). This species is rarely reported during winter.

Snow Bunting: Good numbers were found in N Iowa, such as the peak of 120 on 17 Jan in Kossuth Co. (MCK), with individuals filtering south as far as Fremont Co. (Tristate CBC) and Red Rock Res., where 20 were seen 4 Jan (JLF, THK). These may have been the same flock of 19 or 20 seen at Saylorville Res. 4-13 Dec (SJD).

Red-winged Blackbird: Migrant flocks were on the move with a warm front in SE Iowa 8-9 Feb (SJD), and males were on territory in SW Iowa by 24 Feb (SJD) and 28 Feb (DLR).

Eastern Meadowlark: 1 was documented on the Glenwood CBC (*DLR), and another was heard and seen at IPL Ponds 21 Jan (DLR). This species apparently winters in very small numbers in extreme SE and SW Iowa.

meadowlark species: Best count was an excellent 635 on 14 Jan in Fremont and Page counties (SJD). Wintering birds were reported as far north and west as Boone and Story counties (SRL, HZ), although CBCs recorded birds in NC Iowa also. Note that the National Geographic Field Guide shows neither meadowlark species wintering in Iowa.

Rusty Blackbird: Unusually far north in midwinter were about 12 seen 17 Jan-7 Feb n. of Algona (MCK). Other reports were 2 from Polk Co. on 26 Jan (SJD), and 1 at a feeder in Madison Co. on 20 Jan (EIA, EuA). A flock of 120 on 24 Feb near Algona (MCK) was early for migrants in NC Iowa.

Brewer's Blackbird: The only report was from the Muscatine CBC.

Common Grackle: 1 or 2 at Sioux Center 1-10 Dec (JV) were n. of the usual winter range.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Two reports were received of birds considerably n. of their usual winter range: 1 near Cushing, Ida Co. 6 Jan (SJD), and another with Rusty Blackbirds in Algona 7 Feb (MCK).

Northern Oriole: There were two December reports, about par for recent years. 1 was at Cedar Rapids 15-28 Dec and counted on the CBC there (*PW), and the other was at Glenwood 4-5 Dec (photos DLR). Both fed on fruit: the Cedar Rapids bird on citrus and jelly at a feeder and the Glenwood bird on crab-apples.

Pine Grosbeak: The only report was from the Decorah CBC.

Purple Finch: The entire Iowa wintering population seemed to be at a feeder in Osceola, where 300+ were counted 28 Feb and 304 banded since 6 Jan (BLB). Otherwise numbers were unremarkable.

House Finch: This species is now a common feeder bird statewide.

Red Crossbill: Small groups were widely reported, mostly from the north half of the state, as far south as Princeton, where 1 was on the CBC, Des Moines, where 3 females were seen 21 Jan (PAL, RAI) and 7 were at a feeder 26 Jan (JLF), and Atlantic, where 3 were at a feeder 26 Dec-13 Jan (EIA, EuA, JLF). Other reports were 8 on the Cedar Falls CBC and 14 on the Saylorville CBC, along with a report from East Okoboji 27 Jan (fide DCH) and a female at a feeder near Boone 10 Jan (fide JJD). Overall, one of the better years, although not spectacular.

White-winged Crossbill: Decidedly rarer than reds this winter, only two reports were received and none were found on CBCs. 3 were at Ames 31 Jan (SJD), and at least 1 was at a Mason City feeder 20 Jan-23 Feb (RGo, CJF).

Common Redpoll: Small numbers appeared in E Iowa, for a better-than-average year for the species. No large flocks were found, and the most southerly sightings were at Muscatine (CBC), Iowa City, where 1 was at a feeder 3 Feb (JLF), and 1 at a Norwalk feeder 4 Dec (SJS). None reported from the western half of Iowa.

Pine Siskin: Numbers were generally poor, although a few sizeable flocks appeared, and at least a few were found statewide. Best counts were 75+ wintering in a Davenport yard, 68 of which were netted by 28 Feb (PCP) and 26 on 26 Jan at Fairmount Cemetery in Scott Co. (THK).

American Goldfinch: The highest count was the 200-250 wintering at feeders in Madison Co. (EIA, EuA).

Evening Grosbeak: This species was virtually absent this year, with none reported on CBCs, and only one report: 2 were at a feeder on the west side of Spirit L. 24-27 Dec (fide DCH).



*Northern Oriole, Glenwood, Iowa,
5 December 1990. Photo by Doug Rose.*

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: A small wintering population appears to be established just n. of Burlington along the Mississippi R. levee, consisting of up to 14 individuals seen at least 15 Dec-16 Feb (EIA, EuA, m.ob.).

OBSERVERS

Carol Ann Alexander (CAA), Fairfield; Pam Allen (PAI), West Des Moines; Reid Allen (RAI), West Des Moines; Eloise Armstrong (EIA), Booneville; Eugene Armstrong (EuA), Booneville; Carl J. Bendorf (CJB), Iowa City; Brian Blevins (BBI), Davenport; Robert Bradley (RBr), Cedar Rapids; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; Tanya E. Bray (TEB), Bellevue, NE; Beth L. Brown (BLB), Osceola; Dennis Carter (DC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Jane R. Clark (JRC), Clive; Ray L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Paul A. Egeland (PAE), Centerville; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; L. Paul Hertzell (LPH), Ames; Jacqueline R. Hill (JRH), Ellsworth; Richard J. Hollis (RJH), Iowa City; Bill F. Huser (BFH), South Sioux City, NE; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Thomas N. Johnson (TNJ), Centerville; Velma Keerbs (VeK), Mallard; Vivian Keerbs (ViK), Mallard; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Ted G. LaGrange (TGL), Clear Lake; Sharon R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Fred Leshner (FLe), LaCrosse, WI; Robert B. Livermore (RBL), Sioux City; Ken Lowder (KLo), Iowa City; Darwin D. Mosman (DDM), Elkhart; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; Randy Pinkston (RPi), Iowa City; Kim L. Pinneke (KLP), Mason City; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Jerry Probst (JPr), Sioux City; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; Douglas L. Rose (DLR), Glenwood; Tim Schantz (TSc), Knoxville; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Sue J. Spieker (SJS), Norwalk; John Van Dyk (JV), Orange City; Jan L. Walter (JLW), Mason City; Pete Wickham (PW), Cedar Rapids; Bob Wiederaenders (BW), Dubuque; Hank Zalatel (HZ), Colo.

Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653

I.O.U. BUSINESS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Saylorville Lake, 3 November 1990 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon.

HILDA SICKELS, SECRETARY

Members present: Jim Dinsmore (presiding), Pam Allen, Eloise Armstrong, Bob Cecil, Rick Hollis, Mark Proescholdt, and Hilda Sickels.

Reports

Treasurer: Wayne Livermore resigned as treasurer after the fall meeting. Dinsmore asked the Nominating Committee (Beth Proescholdt, Francis Moore, and Bob Myers) to nominate a candidate for this position. They nominated Pam Allen of West Des Moines and she was elected to the office by a telephone vote of the Board of Directors. Allen was welcomed to the board. The bank accounts will be handled through a bank in West Des Moines. Expenditures to date for 1990 total \$5,125.65. Membership records have also been transferred to Pam.

Records: The committee is working on 1990 records. The checklist will be revised after they complete work on 1990 records. They also plan to have a yearly review of their Executive Secretary.

Publications: Dennis Carter has been appointed to the committee with a term expiring in 1995. Issue 3 of Iowa Bird Life was printed on recycled paper.

Membership: A new membership pamphlet will be printed as soon as photographs are ready. We had 23 new members in 1990.

Atlas: Hollis (on behalf of Thompson) asked that all atlas cards be turned in.

Big Day Committee: This committee continues with Ray Cummins and Eugene Armstrong as members.

Education Committee: The committee continues to make progress with this project. The board approved a request that a local artist be commissioned to do art work for the booklet.

New Business

Future meetings: The spring 1991 meeting will be in Waterloo on 17-19 May. Francis Moore is local chair. We have received an invitation to hold the fall 1991 meeting at Camp Wesley Woods near Indianola. There are no bids for the spring 1992 meeting. The American Ornithologists' Union will be meeting in Ames in June, their first meeting ever in Iowa.

Organized Tours: A company that organizes bird/nature tours wrote Dinsmore to see if the I.O.U. wants to get involved in co-sponsoring such tours. Dinsmore will gather more information.

A budget for 1991 was discussed. Two major projects (Education Committee booklet on birds and atlas project) will be nearing completion in the next year or two and both will require major expenses.

The board agreed that they supported providing major funding for both of these.

Hollis suggested that we look into having I.O.U. pins available for members. It was moved (Hollis, Sickels second) that we do this. Motion passed. Several possible designs were circulated and one was selected; Hollis will take care of orders.

The idea of having a permanent traveling display for the I.O.U. was discussed and was approved. Thompson will work on this and report back to the board.

SPRING BUSINESS MEETING

Cedar Falls, 18 May 1991, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

HILDA SICKELS, SECRETARY

President Jim Dinsmore welcomed members and thanked Francis Moore and his committee for planning the meeting. Minutes of the Fall 1990 business meeting were accepted (Motion: Hank Zaletel, second Carol Thompson) as printed in *Iowa Bird Life* (60:27-28).

Reports

Treasurer: Dinsmore announced that Treasurer Wayne Livermore resigned last September. The Nominating Committee nominated Pam Allen of West Des Moines to fill his term. This nomination was approved by a vote of the Board of Directors. Copies of Allen's Treasurer's report were circulated. Details of the report appear below. The report was accepted as circulated. Allen has arranged for her office to be bonded.

Records Committee: Dinsmore reported for Bendorf. All 1989 records have been reviewed and a report is being prepared for publication. Most of the 1990 records have been reviewed. An operating manual for committee members has been prepared. Ray Cummins was nominated for a full 6-year term starting this spring; this has been approved by the Board of Directors.

Education Committee: Hollis reported that the education booklet is almost complete. Two items that still need to be finished are a list of local contact people and the bibliography.

Big Day Committee: Participants were asked to turn in their reports as soon as possible.

Membership Committee: Jim Sinclair and Diane Porter have revised the membership brochure and copies were available for distribution.

New Business

Budget: The Board of Directors has approved a 1991 budget estimating income of \$9,905 and expenses of \$7,850. They recommended that the dues remain the same in 1992.

I.O.U. pins: Rick Hollis announced that new I.O.U. pins were available to members for \$5 each.

I.O.U. display: Carol Thompson discussed the I.O.U. traveling display that she and Rick Hollis prepared. She encouraged others to use it at local or statewide meetings to promote the I.O.U.

Birdline: Jim Fuller encouraged members to provide material for the Iowa Birdline.

Future meetings:

Rolling Hills Audubon Society of Indianola has offered to host the fall 1991 meeting. It was moved (Hank Zaletel, second Rick Hollis) to accept this invitation. Motion carried. The meeting will be held at Camp Wesley Woods on 13-15 September; estimated costs are \$40-45.

Dale Fye, on behalf of a Cedar Rapids group, has offered to host the spring 1992 meeting. Probable dates are 17-19 May at a nearby camp. It was moved (Marlys Huff, second Thompson) to accept this offer. Motion carried.

Election of officers:

Beth Proescholdt, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented nominations for the following offices; all were running for a 2-year term.

President: Ann Barker was nominated; there were no further nominations and Ann was elected.

Vice President: Bob Cecil was nominated; there were no further nominations and Bob was elected.

Board of Directors (3 vacancies): Diane Porter, Mark Proescholdt, and Harold White were nominated.

There were no other nominations and all three were elected to office.

Field Trips: Bob Cecil circulated material on a planned field trip on 22 June to birding areas in the Croton Unit of Shimek Forest.

TREASURERS REPORT--1990, PAM ALLEN, TREASURER

Assets 31 Dec 1989		\$25,518.59
1990 addition	4,735.41	
Assets 31 Dec 1990		\$30,254.00
Cash (see note 1)	6,713.97	
Cash (see note 2)	431.90	
CD (see note 3)	20,000.00	
CD (see note 4)	3,000.00	
Interest on CD (see note 5)	108.13	
Income 1990		\$10,432.89
Contributions	2,176.41	
Bird-a-thon	578.40	
Iowa Birdline	302.94	
Endowment Fund	96.00	
Breeding Bird Atlas	800.00	
Unspecified	399.07	
Membership/subscriptions	6,608.00	
Regular member	4,105.00	
First family member	1,014.00	
Second family member	347.00	
Third + members	30.00	
Life members	440.00	
Institutional members	672.00	
Sales-I.O.U. materials	232.02	
Interest income	1,026.05	
Meeting income	390.41	
Expenses 1990		\$5,697.48
Publications Committee	4,163.34	
Iowa Bird Life	2,768.10	
I.O.U. News	1,395.24	
Committee/officer expenses	1,534.14	
President	34.97	
Treasurer	213.29	
Board of Directors	8.11	
Education Committee	82.50	
Membership Comm.	114.28	
Birdline	232.92	

Materials (I.O.U. pins)	501.00
Peregrine Fund donation	250.00
Misc. expenses	97.07

Fund Balance Breakdown, 31 December 1990

Endowment (total fund)	7,793.90
General Endowment	3,464.20
Bird-a-thon	1,512.05
Book royalties	2,817.65
Life Memberships	5,540.00
Birdline Fund	509.92
Breeding Bird Atlas	1,200.00
Meeting fund	1,090.77
Operating Fund	14,119.41

Total Fund Balance \$30,254.00

Note 1. Norwest Bank, Cedar Falls, Iowa

Note 2. First National Bank, Ames, IA

Note 3. 12 month CD, matures 26 June 1991

Note 4. 3 month CD, matures 26 March 1991

Note 5. Interest earned on \$3,000 CD at 31 December 1990

IOWA BIRDLINE REPORT--1990

JIM FULLER

As the table below indicates, use of the birdline increased in 1990. The number of calls and the number of reports both increased over use in 1989. Because of this, in addition to the weekly messages, the message was updated an additional 149 times meaning that there was an update every 1.8 days. The birdline received its greatest usage when the Ivory Gull was at Red Rock. There were 211 (!) calls and 28 reports that week. The birdline has also helped recruit new members to the I.O.U. as well as getting a number of calls from the general public and the media relative to birds.

	1990	1989
Total calls	5,364	4,767
calls/week	103	92
range	65-211	49-239
total reports	524	320
reports/week	10	6
range	3-28	1-19
regular messages	52	52
updates	149	NA